The Beaver

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY Hudson's Bay Company. OUTFIT 267 NUMBER 3
INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670

Governor's Christmas Message

WE all associate Christmas with friendship and re-union. The thousands of miles which separate most of us only quicken our desire to share this Spirit of the Season, and I, for my part, particularly value the privilege of sending to every member of the Great Company my greetings and good wishes.

Whatever your position and wherever you may be stationed, I want each one of you to know that the work you do is a vital and necessary contribution to the success of our organization. For I am confident that the collective force of loyalty and enthusiasm in each one of you is of sufficient power to overcome the problems and difficulties which at times obscure the path of our advance.

The year which is nearly over has been one of almost incessant international strain, and we must be thankful that recent events have brought more definite hope of peace and prosperity. If better times are ahead, let us remember this—our proud tradition has its foundation in the great pioneer work of those first adventurers and we, in our turn, must continue to lead the way.

To you all, a very merry Christmas and good fortune throughout the coming year.

R. A. Cooper.

Governor.

HBC PACKET

The old business of "Gentlemen Adventurers" somehow will not die. It has been emphasized more than once in these pages that there may have been gentlemen in the Company at one time or another, that the use of the word originated outside the Company and that the official, legal title is "The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay." Still perversions crop up. The latest, as reported in the *New York Times*, describes the speed record of the Burlington railroad's stainless steel stream-lined "Zephyr" which streaked from Chicago to Denver, 1017 miles, in twelve hours and twelve and a half minutes on a special run with a special party of executives and guests who formed a temporary club called "Gentlemen Adventurers trekking to Denver."

* * *

The best story emerging from a busy season of selling Hudson's Bay Point Blankets comes from the Vancouver store, where a gentleman paused before the brilliant ground floor display and after a few moments' reflection asked if he could use a telephone. The salesman standing by blinked in restrained astonishment when the prospective customer put through a call to Texas to ask his wife which colour she would like. The Hudson's Bay Point Blanket business has been like that this year—full of incidents which warm the heart of the merchant and which continue to confirm all our best opinions of the blankets themselves.

* * *

The spiking of irresponsible rumour became, this season, a business requiring speed and patience. Very severe ice conditions in the Western Arctic and consequent delays to the ships delivering supplies to mission, police and trading posts along the coast stimulated an unusual crop of ominous forecasts of disaster. The fact that one of the Company motor schooners had on board a young fur trader and his bride was more than the romance hungry newspapers could resist. For days the news services played up all the grim prospects of slow starvation in the lonely North, and it took a lot of official "statements" to establish the truth, which was, briefly, that delays were not serious, that wireless communications were regular and that food supplies were adequate. It would be a dull world if we could not read occasionally of adventures, but when some not-too-responsible traveller from the North sits in the Macdonald Hotel, Edmonton, and forecasts for the papers the probability of a winter of hunger and suffering for most of the Western Arctic, it takes a lot of printed words to correct the error.

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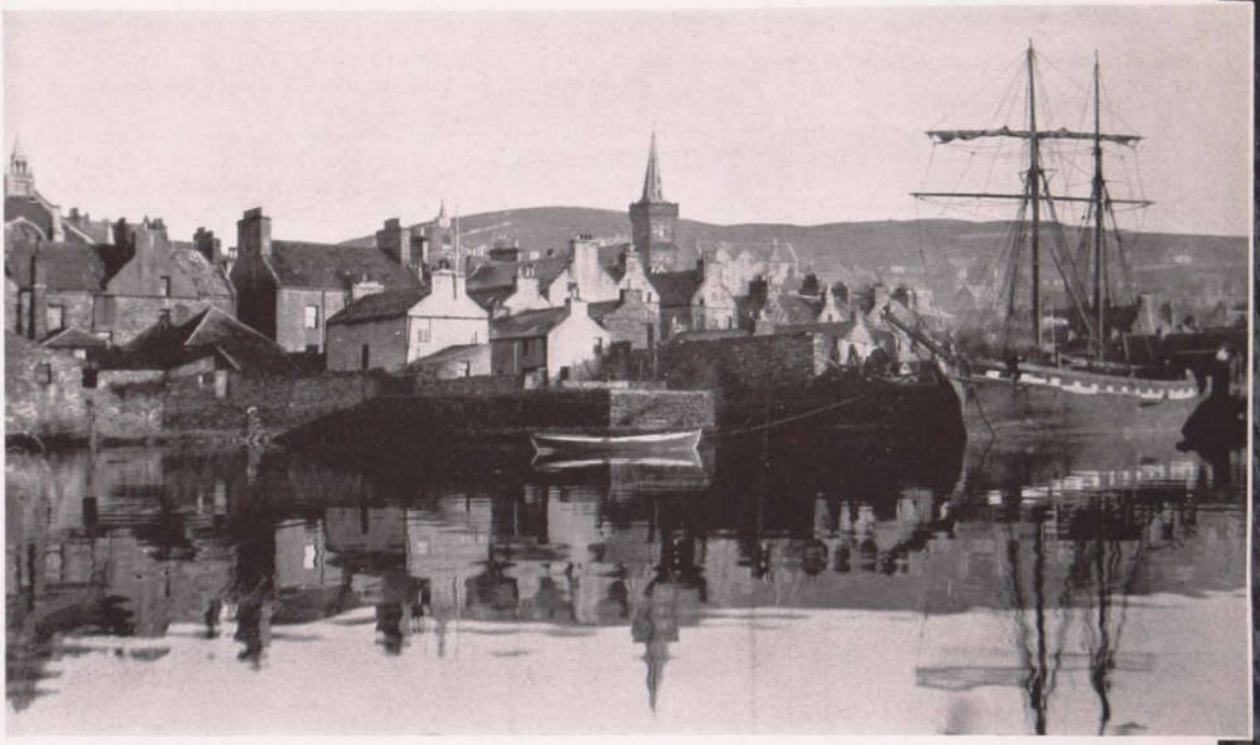
EDITORIAL AND CIRCULATION OFFICES — HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE, WINNIPEG

Orkney and the Hudson's Bay Company



Stromness Harbour

An Old Close, Stromness

IN the year 1795 the minister of the united parishes of Sandwick and Stromness in Orkney, writing his contribution to the "Old" Statistical Account of Scotland, says of the Hudson's Bay Company: "They have about 400 or 500 men in these settlements, of whom it is presumed three fourths are Orknese (*sic*), as they find them more sober and tractable than the Irish, and they engage for lower wages than either the English or the Irish."

Three quarters seemed a surprisingly high proportion and, lest it might be an exaggerated estimate, it seemed well to have it checked from official records. Replying to my enquiries the secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company in London informs me, "in the year 1799 about five hundred and thirty persons were employed by the Hudson's Bay Company, at their fur trade posts in North America, of whom four hundred and sixteen, or approximately seventy-eight and a half percent of the total, were Orkneymen." The minister's estimate was thus actually under the mark, and it will be seen that the editor of *The Beaver* had good grounds for seeking some account of those far off islands and their sober and tractable inhabitants who played so remarkable a part in the business of the historic Company.

I

To begin with the islands. Writing this paper in one of them, you can see to the southward from the window six more, all inhabited, besides three or four smaller green or brown fragments of land, all grouped about the wide salt basin of Scapa Flow, where at regular intervals the German high seas fleet rises ship by ship from the depths to be towed away ignominiously bottom upwards and make the fortunes of a number of

By J. STORER CLOUSTON, Author of "The Lunatic at Large," "Mr. Essington in Love," "The Spy in Black," "Our Member Mr. Muttlebury," "Scots Wha Hae," "The History of Orkney," and numerous other works.

Mr. Clouston, who is internationally famous for his series of popular novels, is without doubt the greatest authority on the history of the Orkney Islands, a subject to which he has devoted life long study. At the request of "The Beaver" he has written the following account of those "far off islands and their sober and tractable inhabitants who played so remarkable a part in the business of the historic Company"

business gentlemen considerably more enterprising than the high seas fleet ever was in its mast-upward days. Except to the southwest, the whole company of isles are low lying, gently undulating in contour, treeless, and for the most part spread with well cultivated green fields. The island of Hoy alone rises, with one heathery range after another, to the steep sided, round topped Ward Hill, nearly sixteen hundred feet high, and looking higher than that and as imposing as many a much greater mountain owing to its sheer fall nearly down to the water's edge. The Mainland—as we call the largest, much the largest—island forms the whole north shore of the flow and stretches some thirty miles in length and about thirteen in breadth at its maximum between this smaller group of South Isles and the much larger and more numerous group of North Isles beyond the hills at the back of the house. Altogether there are nearly seventy of them, of which some thirty are inhabited.

The picture of the South Isles applies in the main to all: a general roundness of contour, a gentle ripple of the surface, whether the land be a long ridge of heather hills (or some more isolated height) or the cultivated lower ground —no jagged edges against the sky—a country neither flat nor mountainous, with its most dramatic features the hills of Hoy and the seaward cliffs all along the west shattering the surge of the Atlantic. If one adds everywhere—especially in the West Mainland—a host of lochs grey as wet granite under wintry clouds and the most brilliant sapphire blue beneath summer skies, paints heather hills and marshes and roadsides every colour in the paint box in the heather-bell and wild flower season, and imagines such a space of heavens over all as is only seen on prairies and at sea, one has a picture of the Orkneys sufficiently distinct to give at least some idea of the land from whence the seventy-eight and a half percent of Company's servants hailed in the latter years of the eighteenth century. And, it may be added, they continued for long after that to form the mainstay of the personnel in what old men called the "Nor'wast."

There are in the islands just two towns, both in the

Mainland, unless one is to count the half town half village of St. Margaret's Hope in South Ronaldsay as a third. Kirkwall, the capital—with its glorious unspoilt Norman cathedral, ready next year (1937) to celebrate its octocentenary; the ruinous but still mostly extant Earls' Palace, the finest building in Scotland of its period (*circa* 1600); the venerable remains of the far older Bishops' Palace; and the quaint narrow winding streets with their older houses gable-on to the causeway—can fairly claim to be one of the most picturesque, ancient and interesting little cities in the British Isles. (For it has a cathedral, and so is a city, even if its population is now under the four thousand mark.)

But it is with Stromness in the south-west corner of the Mainland, fifteen miles west of Kirkwall, that the Hudson's Bay Company is associated. There the gun was fired that announced the coming of the Company's ships. There its agent lived and handled its monies and engaged its servants. There the flag with the red cross and the four beavers was flown; there the belles of the town danced till all hours of the morning with the Company's officers; and there the tradition of Arctic winters, the trapper's perils, and the coming and going between the settlements in the Nor'wast and the quaint little town curling round its land-locked bay, are still vividly remembered.

Though a child in years compared with Kirkwall—no older than the early part of the seventeenth century—Stromness has quite as ancient an appearance, and in situation is an easy first. So far as I have been able to discover, none of the very earliest houses now survive, but these were few in number. It was not till the beginning of the eighteenth century that the town began to grow rapidly, and to all appearances what was built from that time onward still for the most part stands today. There was just room for a single narrow street between the foot of a high steep slope and the water of the little bay, and as the hill-face curved this way and that the street followed the curves, twisting, rising, and falling along the water's edge. On either hand crow-stepped gables line this tortuous lane styled by courtesy a street, with, on one side, picturesque little courtyards and alleys every now and then mounting the hill as high as they can climb, and, on the other, a row of small piers behind the houses, and between them glimpses of green translucent water. This goes on for a mile or more, and the result is Stromness, sometime headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company in Orkney.

A little way behind the south end of the town, separated by a ten-knot tideway, the Ward Hill of Hoy towers up through a cloud of sea gulls floating and crying above the chimney cans and the boats in the harbour. In front of the town a tangle of hills, green fields and sounds winding their way towards Scapa Flow stretches eastwards, and for the rest of the circumference of the compass the steep slope shelters the basin like a wall. From this haven sailed year after year, during the space of two centuries, a sober and tractable contingent through the racing tideway out into the Atlantic.

2

And what sort of people were these islanders that they should be chosen above all others to do the Company's spadework in the frozen latitudes of Hudson Bay? One who lives among the up-to-date Orkneymen of today, those stalwart agriculturalists learned, from large farmer to small crofter, in the latest lore concerning seeds, top dressings, and breeds of live stock, with a wireless mast before each subsidy-built house, and daughters who go to the local balls looking as if they had walked out of the *Tatler*, can scarcely hope to realize the very different people who lived a century and a half ago. Fortunately there are extant more than one picture of them painted by a contemporary pen. One of the shrewdest of these, true in its essentials still, is *Murdoch Mackenzie's account written in 1750.

"The commonalty," he says, "are healthy, hardy, well shaped, subject to few diseases, and capable of an abstemious and laborious life at the same time, but, for want of profitable employment, slow at work, and many of them inclined to idleness. In sagacity and natural understanding they are inferior to few of the commons in Britain; sparing of their words, reserved in their sentiments, especially of what seems to have a connection with their interests; apt to aggravate or magnify their losses, and studious to conceal or diminish their gains; tenacious of old customs tho' never so inconvenient, averse to new till recommended by some successful examples among their own rank or acquaintance and then universally keen to imitate; honest in their dealings with one another, but not so scrupulous with respect to the master of the ground; often running deeply in arrears to him, while they punctually clear credit with everyone else. These and some other singularities may be ascribed to the absurd

*He was a grandson of Murdoch Mackenzie, Bishop of Orkney from 1676 to 1688, and himself master of the grammar school of Kirkwall for a short time, and afterwards a skilful and enterprising geographer.

Above left: The Isle of Hoy from the Stromness side. On the left is Ward Hill; on the right Cuilags Hill.

Above right: An Orkney harvest field; Stromness beyond, with Cuilags Hill, Hoy, in the background; the Kairn on the extreme right.

Right: The Old Man of Hoy, 450 feet high, on the western (Atlantic) coast of Hoy.

and unpolitick custom of short leases, racked rents and high entries, which prevail in other parts of Scotland as well as here. Theft and other crimes are often concealed, even by those who have sustained the injury, from the opinion that it is a degree of guilt in a private person to become the voluntary instrument in another's sufferings; and that the imprecations of the afflicted, tho' suffered by the hand of justice, are followed by visible judgements. They are dexterous with the oar and the management of boats, and when they betake themselves to the sea, make sober, honest, and industrious sailors. Tho' in the neighbourhood of the Highlands of Scotland, yet they have neither the language, dress, custom of wearing arms, clannish adherence and subjection to their masters,

or violence of resentments for which the Highlanders are remarkable; their manners and customs resemble those of the southern rather than of the northern parts of the kingdom, their traffic and correspondence being with the former only. . . . The language is English in the Scotch dialect, with more of the Norwegian than any other accent, these islands having formerly been a province of Norway, of which they still retain some of the customs and a little of the language, which they call *Noren*, much the same with what is presently spoken in Iceland and the Faro Islands."

To complete this picture one may add a couple of extracts from the Old Statistical Account, written in the 1790's by two of the ablest and most scholarly of the Orkney ministers. The Rev. William Clouston, minister of Stromness and Sandwick, writes:

"The people are industrious, and attentive to their interests, and this last is a leading feature in their character. They may still be considered as economical, although in this they are far short of the past age. Among a body of 3000 people (his own two parishes) it may be presumed that there are some of vicious character and depraved manners; but, in general, they are decent in their behaviour, respectful to their superiors, and modest in their carriage and conversation, especially the women. In a seaport such as Stromness, to which there is a great resort of shipping, it might be conjectured that immoralities and a depravity of manners might prevail, but it is to be observed to their honour that there has been only one bastard child to a stranger for ten years past. . . . They are fond of dress, the most venial of all modern luxuries, but their regard to their interest keeps them from excess in this. They live pretty close and quietly at home. Their habits of life leading them to affairs of interest, there are few inclined to reading, and their genius is not turned to poetry. They are fond of music and dancing, and a dancing-master is sure to meet with encouragement at the village of Stromness. They excel in the knowledge of sea affairs and what respects shipping, and their genius seems turned this way. . . . They have no turn to the military line and there is rarely an instance of anyone enlisting as a soldier. They prefer the rigour of the severe climate of Hudson Bay to the idleness and showy appearance of a soldier."

On the whole an exemplary sort of people, one perceives, so far as their general conduct went; and yet this was certainly not for lack of physical vigour, as the next brief extract shows. This time it is the Rev. George Low, minister of Birsay and Harray, a naturalist and observer of real originality and acumen, who writes:

"The people in this parish are good, honest, manly, decent men. The general sizes of the people are thus: My clerk, the writer of this paper, is six feet one inch high; we have many six feet high; and, in general, they are very strong men, being hard wrought."

Yet, tough the muscles might be, there were things that shook even the hardiest.

"Within these last seven years," writes the Rev. James Watson, of South Ronaldsay and Burray, in the same Statistical Account, "the minister has been twice interrupted in administering baptism to a female child before the male child, who was baptised immediately after. When the service was over, he was gravely told that he had done very wrong, for as the female child was first baptised, she would, on her coming to years of discretion, most certainly have a strong beard, and the boy would have none. No couple chuses to marry except with a growing moon, and some even wish for a flowing tide. The existence of fairies and witches is seriously believed by some, who, in order to protect themselves from their attacks, draw imaginary circles, and place knives in the walls of houses."

Also, from the report of the Rev. George Barry, minister of Kirkwall and St. Ola, we learn that: "In many days of the year they will neither go to sea in search of fish, nor perform any sort of work at home. In the time of sickness or danger, they often make vows to this or the other favourite saint, at whose church or chapel in the place they lodge a piece of money, as a reward for their protection, and they imagine that if any person steals or carries off that money, he will instantly fall into the same danger from which they, by their pious offering, have been so lately delivered. On going to sea, they would reckon themselves in the most imminent danger, were they by accident to turn their boat in opposition to the sun's course."

Of such a type, physically and mentally, were the "commonalty" of Orkney who built the cabins and dragged the sledges and trapped the beaver in the settlements round Hudson Bay. Among the Orkney contingents, as we shall see, were a few of higher social rank and better education who held commissions in the Company's service, but a list of sixty-three names, with parishes and occupations attached, joining up at Stromness in the year 1798, includes but one man, Alexander Kennedy from South Ronaldsay, "writer" (*i.e.* lawyer or clerk), who followed a learned calling, and in fact was later appointed chief factor. The rest were composed of forty-five "labourers," three "smiths"—one of these having the curiously medieval designation "smith and armourer"—six "sailors," two "steersmen," and one each of the following occupations: bricklayer, "craft master," tailor, shipwright, boat-builder and sawyer.

To understand how these men, very far from being born in the purple—some of them still apprehensive of a bearded daughter if she were baptized out of her turn, and dependent on an "imaginary circle" for keeping the witches at bay—exhibited such marked qualities of responsibility and self-control (which are not the characteristics of a "commonalty" everywhere) and yet were content with the modest ambition of saving their wages and making more comfortable their later years, one must look into the islands' history.

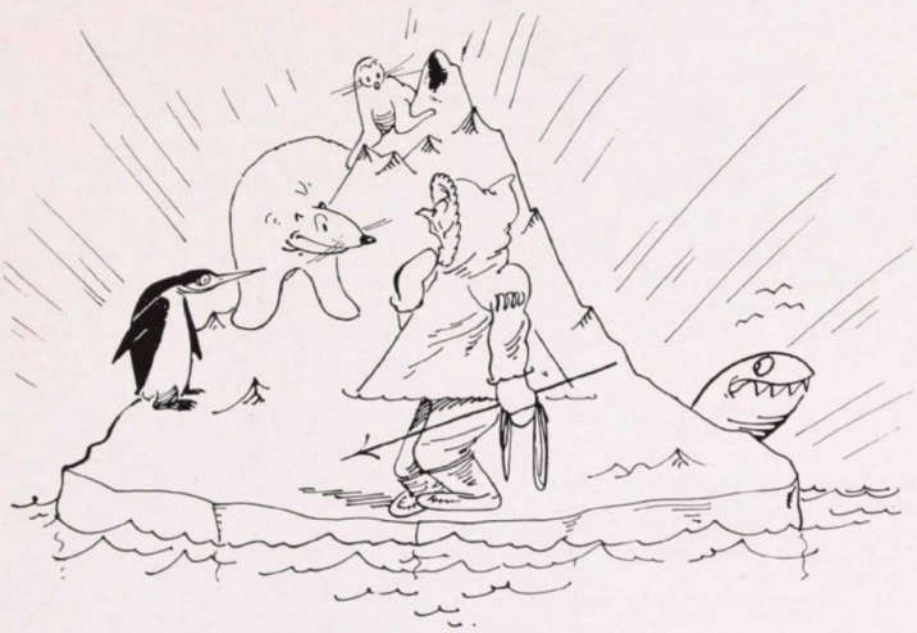
(In the next issue Mr. Clouston tells how peculiar circumstances of Orkney land tenure tended to produce men ideally suited for service in Hudson Bay, and quotes two interesting extracts from the Old Statistical Account, the one containing a wealth of information, the other being an amusing diatribe against the Company by a divine of 1797.)

Reflections on the North

—Specially reflected for "The Beaver"

By
STEPHEN LEACOCK

Illustrations by D'EGVILLE



I am well aware that the North "teems everywhere with animal life."

SOME years ago I was engaged in Montreal in what is called "historical research," a thing done by professors in the heart of the summer in the depth of a library where there is no one to check up their time. Often it takes years and years to write a chapter.

But the point is that I wanted to make a reference to the foundation of the Hudson's Bay Company over two and a half centuries ago, and I wanted to be certain of their official name. The companies of those days had queer names, all alike and yet all different—"gentlemen" of this and "adventurers" of that, or "merchants" of the other. I couldn't remember whether the Hudson's Bay Company were called gentlemen, or adventurers, or business men, or captains of industry, or crooks. I looked into a lot of old volumes and got no wiser. Then a sudden idea came to me: "I'll telephone them!" It had occurred to my mind that the Hudson's Bay Company of Charles the Second were still right there down town in Montreal and doing business. So I called the number and asked, "Would you mind telling me the full official name of your company?" "Certainly. We're often asked for it. We're the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay."

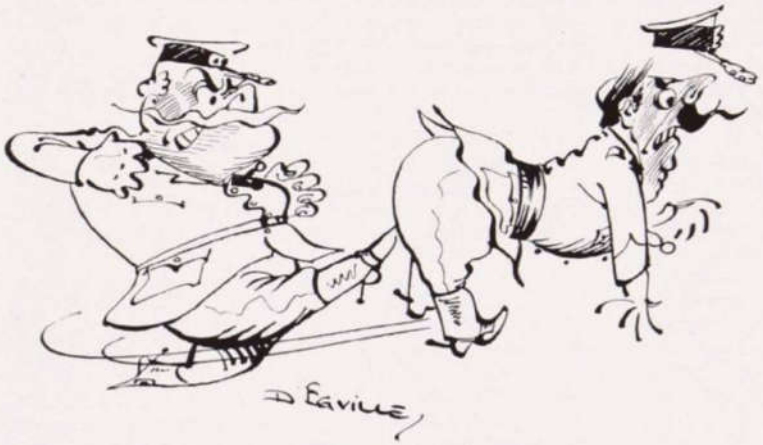
It seems wonderful, doesn't it? I almost imagined myself going a little further and saying, "Hullo, Prince Rupert, can I speak with your cousin Mr. Charles the Second?" "Hold the line a minute and I'll see. I'm sorry, our Mr. Charles is in conference with our Miss Nell Gwynne, and we don't like to disturb him."

* * * * *

The thoughts aroused by such an incident characterize the size and majesty of the Great North; the fascinating sweep of time and space that its name involves; the North, where man scribbles in vain a little history and Nature buries it in a blizzard of snow.

The North is the only place where Nature still can claim to rule, the only place as yet but little vexed by man. All over the globe there spread his noisy failures; the North alone is silent and in peace. Give man time and he will spoil that too; but the time has not, thank Heaven, as yet arrived. The fascists, we read, are mowing down the reds, or the yellows, or whatever they are, in Barcelona with machine guns. But the Eskimos of Ungava are not troubling the Algonquins. Someone is dropping bombs all round Gibraltar, but

none fall on the delta of the Mackenzie. The organization of the air defence of London hums as loud as the mosquitoes of the Great Slave Lake, but all is quiet on the Coppermine. The Poles are so worked up about their corridor to the sea that there may be a first class war about it; but the



A crack in the rear is about the most deadly thing that one general can administer to the other.

Indians are using the same old portage route from the Moose to the Albany, and going right across the railway track, and no one worries about it.

Compared with the rest of a troubled world, the North seems a vast realm of peace.

* * * * *

No great war, no war on a real scale, ever devastated the great northwest. But listen to this forgotten—or rather unknown—episode of history. That arch-disturber of mankind, Napoleon Bonaparte, once tried to make such a war, once planned to strike at England by means of a great sweep to be made from the snow-covered plains and mountains of the West. This was to take the Canadas and the settlements of the seaboard from the rear. Students of military science like myself (I like it best when it's about a hundred and fifty years old) do not need to be told that a crack in the rear is about the most deadly thing that one general can administer to the other. That is why a great commander like Marlborough or Napoleon was always careful to have his rear resting on something reliable—like a marsh, or broken rock or a field of cactus. And that was why a great mind like that of Napoleon would turn to grandiose schemes of hitting, not merely another general in the rear, but a whole nation. Napoleon went to Egypt, not to kill the Egyptians—that was just done on the side—but with a view to getting at the rear of Turkey, and he planned the still vaster enterprise of throwing India on the rear of Europe. But for the defeat of Tippoo Sahib at Seringapatam this might have been done. Readers who don't know about this "rear" business often wonder how people like Tippoo Sahib and Zenghis Khan get into our history. That's it—by the rear entrance.

Well, at any rate Napoleon's plan was to organize the vast tribes of the Northwest—presumably the Crees and the Doukhobors and the Albertans—to overwhelm Ottawa and Montreal. His idea was correct in a way and came true later on, but it was premature. It was characteristic of Napoleon's profound ignorance of America, to imagine the Northwest filled with likely looking Indians who could be recruited into Kellerman's dragoons and Milhaud's cuirassiers and descend (in four or five days) from the Rocky Mountains on Montreal with cries of "Vive l'Empereur!"

So Napoleon set out to get information. All that could be found out in Paris (the year was about 1805) was that a man called Mackenzie had been right across the continent to the Pacific Ocean and had written a book about it, published in 1801 under the title "Voyages on the River St. Lawrence and Through the Continent of America to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans"—which, for a Scotchman, was short and snappy. Napoleon ordered the book translated in French and printed. Only two or three copies were made, beautifully bound and embellished. There is no trace of any of them left except of the copy given to General Bernadotte, afterwards, by Napoleon's influence, made Crown Prince of Sweden, and great-grandfather to the present King. Napoleon wrote to Bernadotte about the scheme, and hence our knowledge of it. The information gathered showed its emptiness—at the time—but later on the notion of a descent from Alberta to take Ottawa in the rear has been worked out with success.

When I write about the North I speak with a certain authority. For I know the North, as few people know it. In the corporeal, bodily sense, I have never been there. But in my arm chair, in front of the fire in my house on Côte des Neiges Road in Montreal, I have traversed it all, from the portages back of Lake Superior to where the Mackenzie delta washes into the tidal seas. I have been with Franklin on the Coppermine and Coronation Gulf, with Hudson till I lost him owing to his own folly, with Mackenzie over the divide, in Red River ox-carts with Butler, and in the foothills with Milton and Cheadle. In the snow-storms and Arctic blizzards I feel perfectly at home; if it gets really bad I just lie down in the snow, along with Stefansson, and let it bury me completely and lie there for a day or two and read a book till it moderates. But I must say I don't think I ever felt such intense cold as on crossing the Coppermine running hard with ice through barren treeless country of slate and stone. Imagine trusting oneself on a river like that on a sort of raft or boat made of willow sticks, wet to the skin, in piercing cold. I had to get up and mix a hot whisky and stir the fire and leave Franklin and Richardson to freeze awhile till I rejoined them. A fine story that,

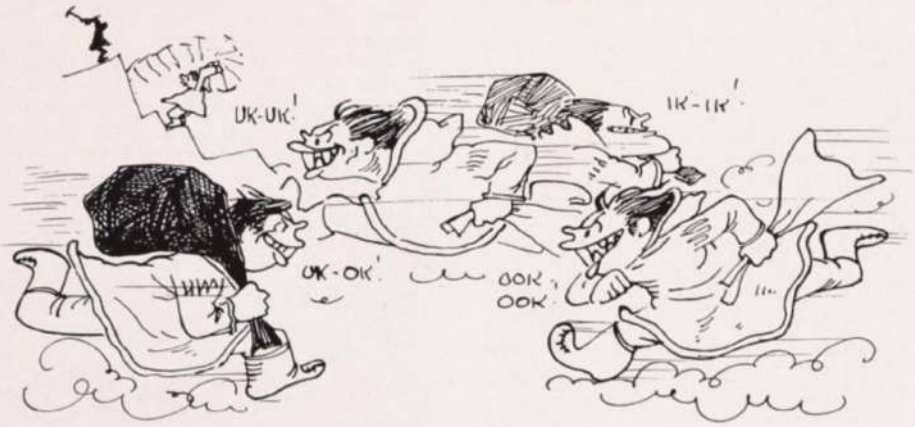
"The Journey to the Polar Sea," by John Franklin: not the narrative of his immortal adventure and heroic death, but the earlier journey down the Mackenzie and along the polar shores with Richardson and young Back. There is a very human little incident in the tale of how Lieutenant Back, youthful and ardent, nearly got left out of the expedition—stayed behind to go to a dance. They sailed without him and he caught them at the Orkneys or somewhere. Back later became a knight and an admiral, returned to the North, again as an explorer, and discovered the Back river that commemorates his name.

Let no one think, from what was said above, of the silence and peace of the North. I am trying to depict it as a vast frozen emptiness. Far be it from me to fall into that worn-out fallacy of the lifelessness of the North. If I ever shared it, I was cured of it long ago by an angry letter I once received from Vilhjalmar Stefansson, an angry letter that proved the beginning of a personal friendship of over twenty years. I had written a little book called "The Adventures of the Far North," and had spoken in it of the North as "Here in this vast territory civilization has no part and life no place. Life struggles northward only to die out in the Arctic cold."

Stefansson, who takes a personal pride in the North and regards Baffin Bay as a superior social centre to Naragansett Beach, felt affronted and wrote, in substance: "You may be a h—— of a humorist, but what you don't know about the North would fill a book. Don't you understand that the North is full of flowers and butterflies and life everywhere?" I answered back mildly: "I meant further north still. The thing must stop somewhere." But I learned the lesson, and I know now that it is just a poet's fancy to speak of the Great North as "silent and untenanted." I am well aware, without being told again by Tyrrel or Stefansson, or anyone touchy about it, that the north "teems everywhere with animal and plant life." I read the other day a rather spiteful account, by an English settler, of the mosquitoes on the shores of the Great Slave lake that made me quite envious. I happen to be the president of the Anti-Mosquito Society of East Simcoe, one of the few active offices that I still retain in retirement. What with coal oil and such things, we have killed off so many mosquitoes that we are beginning to run out of them and may have to send for more. It is good to know that if a real shortage comes the Great Slave lake district can supply an adequate "carry-over."

But if the North, even at its emptiest, still waves with Arctic flowers and hums with a mist of insects, there is a sense in it which contrasts with all other parts of the globe. The role of man and nature, as seen elsewhere, are reversed. The elemental forces still rule; and over it falls, inevitable and eternal, the winter night.

Vilhjalmar Stefansson is not the only one of the great explorers of our time whom I have been privileged to know. I recall a wonderful evening in my house at Montreal, listening to Raoul Amundsen, just back from his discovery of the South Pole. The eminence of that exploit makes it part of the history of the world, and makes people lose from sight Amundsen's earlier achievement: his accomplishment, in the little *Gjoa*, of the northwest passage, which gives him a place in the heroic annals of Canada. Amunsden, when I met him, was lecturing—a job which he hated as much as all good lecturers do—in order to get enough money to make another polar voyage, anywhere so long as it was polar. I was to be chairman of his meeting, and so I called upon him after breakfast with a list of social invitations—things he abominated. I said, "Captain Amundsen, the Ladies' Morning Musical would like to invite you as their guest this morning." "Thank you," he said, "but I would rather not." I went on to the next item. "Sir William Peterson would like to know if you would care to come up at ten o'clock and see Mc-



"This one is call' 'Heskimo Loading Coal'!"

Gill University?" "Thank you; I would rather not see it." "The Woman's Canadian Club are holding a lunch and would like you to come as a guest of honour." "That is very kind, but I would rather not." "The Ski Club want to give a tea." "No, thank you." "The Norski, Danski, and Svenski Associations would like to escort you with torches from the hotel to the hall." "It is very kind, but no, I would rather take a cab."

"Now," I said, "we come to the last item. After your lecture is over, will you come up to my house and have some Scotch whisky?" "Yes, very gladly, indeed; that is most kind." And at my house that night Amundsen talked till the small hours of his South Pole experience, talking chiefly with Jack McCrae of Flanders Fields, who was also a polar explorer of sorts, having just made a trip through the Hudson Straits.

I also knew Captain Bernier, our own Canadian explorer, who saw more of our arctic seas than any other living man. I met him at a big dinner in New York, where he was the chief guest. He had some moving pictures—very new and very imperfect things then—of polar scenes. Bernier apologized for them. "I 'ave to hapologize," he said, "for the pictures. We didn't know ver' well how to take them. This one is call' 'Heskimo Loading Coal'!"

Load it they certainly did! The picture had been taken with a wrong timing; the Eskimos dashed in one hop a hundred yards from the ship to a great cliff of coal; their picks moved so fast you could not see the points; they filled bags of coal in four seconds; and were back on the ship in one hop. Next to me at the banquet sat an American coal man. "Gee," he said, "I wish I had those fellers at thirty cents an hour!"

Ernest Shackleton I knew also, and well. It is not generally known, for it has never been made history, that after the war Shackleton planned a Canadian polar expedition to explore the Beaufort Sea. He had wanted to go south again, but the British admiralty were very half-hearted about giving him support. So he turned to Canada, and came to Montreal to raise money. I was one of those who tried to help in this, and, with the government's and private generosity, we soon had plenty of money in sight for the expedition. Exploration is as cheap as human life itself. I arranged on behalf of Shackleton for the services of a corps of young McGill scientists. Then he asked me if I would like to go as historiographer, and I said yes. I knew McGill would spare me. Any college would send its stall to the Beaufort Sea any time. I said I needed no pay, and so for twenty-four hours I was historiographer of the Beaufort Sea Canadian Expedition.

But it came to a sudden end. I said to Shackleton that I would supply all my own Scotch whisky for the year's trip, as I didn't want to be a charge on the ship. And he said they didn't take whisky on polar expeditions and, outside of the medicine chest, didn't allow it. Another illusion of the North shattered! I always thought that explorers, the ship once well set in the ice and buried in snow, went down below with a pack of cards and a keg of whisky. But it seems not. They take observations. I resigned, and a little later news came that the admiralty had gone right about face and Shackleton was given a ship, and he went south and never came back.

But all of this that I have said of the North is supposed to move groping towards a general idea, to throw a dim light upon a general conclusion. Here is this vast, beautiful space—the last part of human heritage to be reached and explored by man. Not much longer can it remain in isolation. Its infinite distance is gone. It thrills with the waves and currents of talking voices: over it hovers the searching aeroplane. Menkind that filled the empty savannahs of the West is moving on the North. Human life and human livelihood have learned easily to adapt themselves where once was hyperborean darkness.

We, speaking collectively for all mankind, have for the present at least made a mess of the rest of the world. Our contriving wits and calculating selfishness had somehow cheated us of what seemed our inheritance. Man struggles in the grasp of his own machinery.

For the North let us make it different. If the vast lands that edge the polar seas—Scandinavia, Russia, Canada—are to be filled with electric light that dims the aurora, with power that defies the cold, and resources that supply the world, let us see to it that in the new trust of the future of the North we make fewer errors than in the old.

COVER PICTURE

This picture, by the English artist Norman Wilkinson, depicts the Hudson Bay naval battle of 1697. The French with five ships were attempting to drive the Hudson's Bay Company from the bay, and d'Iberville, in the *Pelican*, reached York Factory first, then in the possession of the Company, and anchored to await the remainder of his fleet. Four English ships arrived and he took them on single-handed. A phase of the battle was afterwards described by the mate of the English vessel, *Hudson's Bay:*

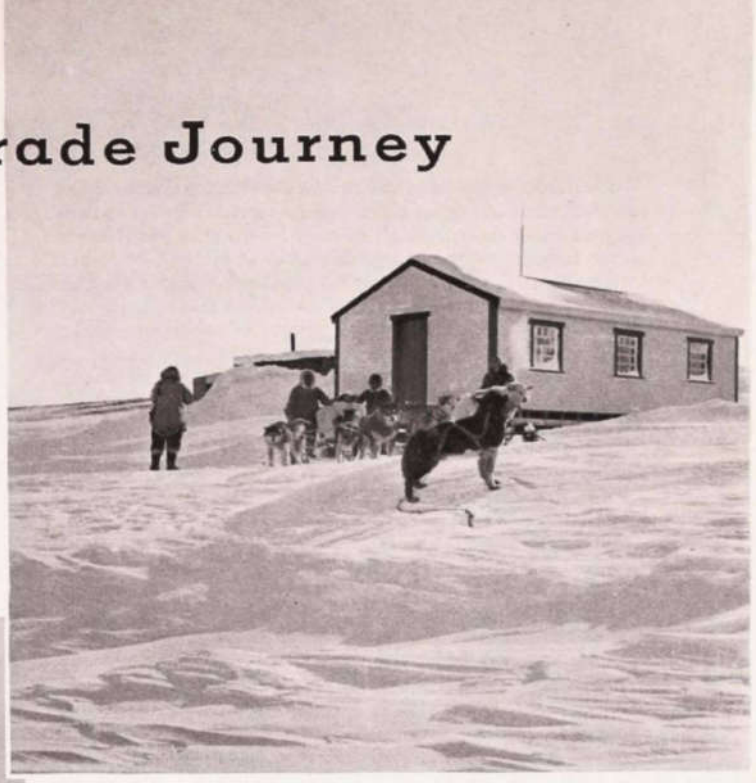
"Capt. Fletcher (of the H.M.S. *Hampshire*) was a brave man, and just before he gave his last broad Side, called to the said Monsr. D'Brevile, bidding him strike, which he refuseing to do, Capt. Fletcher took a Glass and drank to him, telling him, he should dine with him immediately; Upon which the said French Capt. Pledged him in another Glass, And there upon his men fired a Volley of Small Shott upon the *Hampshire* which was returned with a like volley to the French man; And after that the said Capt. Fletcher was not Seen; So that it was supposed the said Capt. Fletcher was then killed."

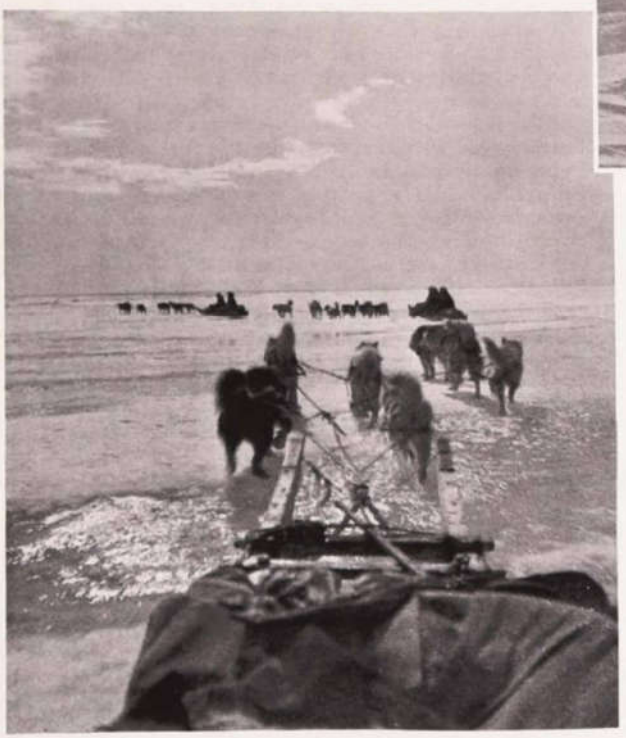
For four hours the English ships raked the *Pelican* fore and aft, and then, after an encounter, yard arm to yard arm, between the *Pelican* and the *Hampshire*, the English ship heeled over and sank. The action was then ended swiftly; the *Hudson's Bay* surrendered and the remaining English vessels escaped. The French fleet arrived and the officer in command of York Factory was forced to surrender. So York Factory once again changed hands.

A Modern Fur Trade Journey

By
CHIEF TRADER W. GIBSON
Ungava District

Routine Fur Trade business took Chief Trader Gibson fifteen thousand miles in six months, from near the Magnetic Pole and forty below zero, through the hundred-degree prairie temperatures and north by sea from Montreal to the Eastern Arctic and zero weather. Then the long haul back to autumn sunshine at Winnipeg





MODERN communications within the space of a period of ten years have completely revolutionized the accessibility of the most remote frontier posts of the Far North. Gone are the days when the sole contact between civilization and many of the isolated spots on the Arctic seaboard was the arrival and hurried departure of the annual supply ship. Radio and the flying machine have shattered this magnificent isolation and aloofness from the activities and happenings of the outside world. These important innovations have ushered in a new era for all those who dwell in our Far Northland.

Top right: The author's team getting ready to leave the Company post at Gjoa Haven, King William Island, for Coppermine, seven hundred miles away. This was on 21st April, 1936, and the temperature was forty degrees below zero. Left: Approaching Coppermine at the end of May, when spring had set in and pools of water stood on the ice. Lower right: Six weeks later. Sailing from Montreal on the "Nascopie" in eighty-five degrees above zero.

The following account of the various stages of a journey undertaken by the writer may be of interest to readers of *The Beaver*. The journey entailed some fifteen thousand miles of travel by land, sea and air, and was made possible only through the utilization of the radio and aeroplane.

While stationed during last March at King William Land post in Western Arctic district a message was received through our short wave radio station at that point. It was from head office in Winnipeg, and advised of my transfer from Western Arctic district to Ungava district. I was instructed to join the R.M.S. *Nascopie* at Montreal by the 14th of July in order to assist at inspections of our Eastern Arctic posts.

King William Land is situated in the central portion of the Canadian Arctic just north of the sixty-eighth parallel. It has always been regarded as one of the least accessible points in the Western Arctic, especially during the winter months. Even now it has felt only the first ripples of that tide of civilization which flowed into the Arctic regions with ever increasing volume during the last two decades.

The Eskimos inhabiting this area are perhaps the most primitive in existence today. Sheltered in this central location by being far removed from the main arteries of communication, civilization has touched them but lightly. Here may still be found Eskimos unsophisticated and possessing in full all the inherent charm and picturesqueness of manners and dress which characterizes the race.

Montreal seemed a surprisingly long distance off amid this Arctic environment in its winter setting, and the month of July potentially near.

The first stage of the journey necessitated reaching Coppermine, which is situated some seven hundred miles distant to the westward in Coronation Gulf. This settlement was the nearest point of contact with Canadian Airways mail and passenger service to and from northern Alberta. Flying in the Far North comes to a standstill over a transitional period during which the seasons change from winter to early summer. Ski equipped machines being used during winter, it is not until the rivers and lakes are open and comparatively free from ice following the spring thaw that the skis are replaced by pontoons and the first flights of the season commence. As the river ice at Coppermine does not break up until the latter part of June, ample time was therefore at my disposal to reach that point travelling by dog team.

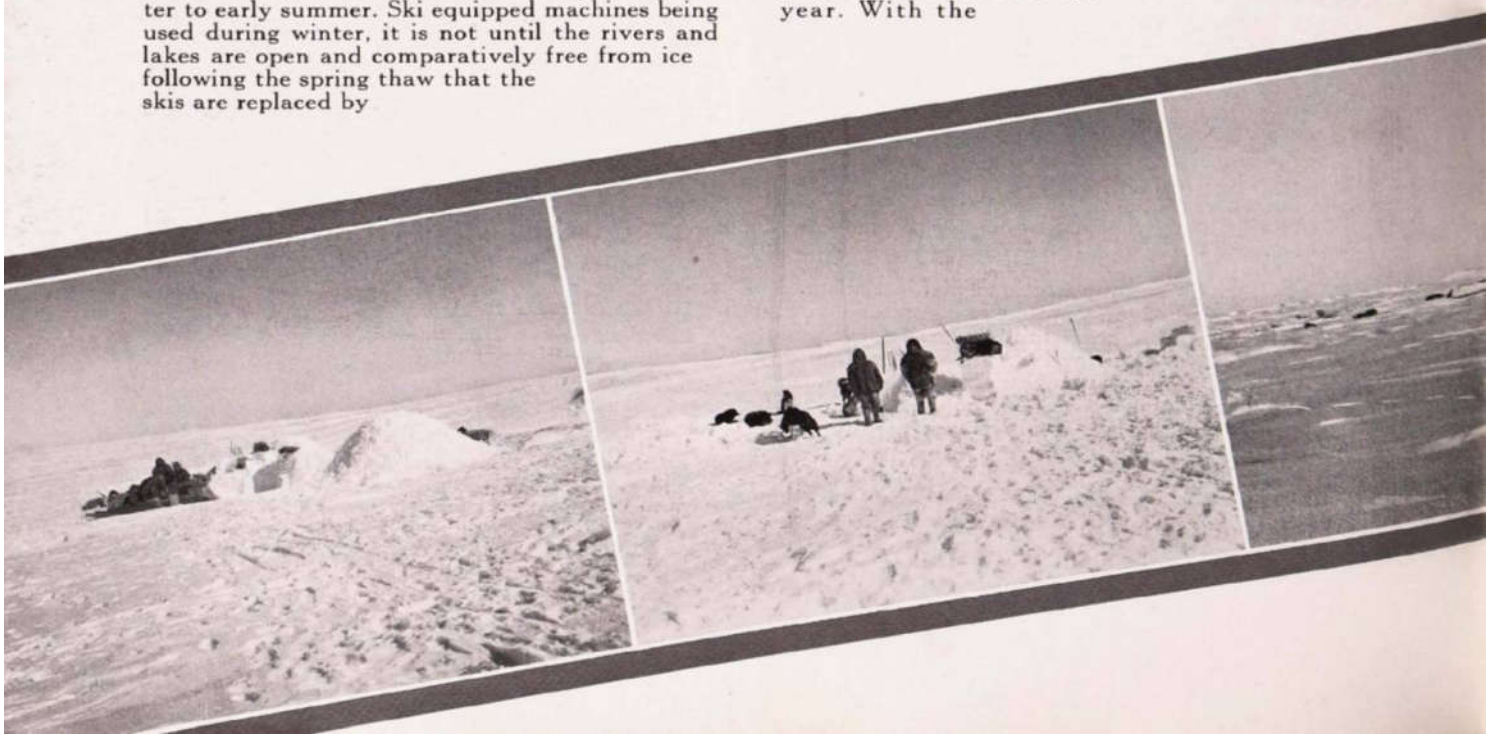
Leaving the post at Gjoa Haven on the 21st of April, the route lay across Queen Maud Sea to Cambridge Bay settlement in Victoria Land, thence through Dease Strait and westward along the southern shores of Coronation Gulf to the mouth of the Coppermine.

I was accompanied as far as Cambridge Bay by a patrol of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in charge of Sergt. G. T. Makinson, an experienced officer with a fine record of Arctic travel. This added greatly to the enjoyment of the journey at its outset.

The sun at this period of the year is high in the heavens and the days comparatively mild. Notwithstanding this, the temperature ranges from 15° to 35° below zero, while heavy snowfalls and thick visibility are features of spring weather. On such days everything is enveloped in an opaque whiteness which obscures horizons and obliterates landmarks, greatly retarding progress. There are even occasional blizzards well into spring which invariably call a halt to travel, sometimes for a period of four or five days. Unfavourable weather conditions encountered in spring travel on the Arctic coast are, however, more than compensated for in the pleasantness and satisfaction of fine days, when skies are unclouded and the spring sun shines down throughout the long day.

The colourful spots of a sledge journey always centre in the native inhabitants. Several Eskimo villages were passed through on the way. These were comprised of the typical Eskimo snow houses, but as Coppermine was neared and the spring advanced perceptibly the winter habitations gave place to the tents of spring and summer.

Sealing on the sea ice through the breathing holes is the universal occupation of the people at this period of the year. With the



darkness and scarcity of winter behind them, they are in full enjoyment of the changing climate and well supplied larders.

Skirting the rugged coast of Coronation Gulf, Coppermine settlement was reached on the 24th of May. The spring by this time had set in properly and the first pools of water were in evidence in the river. The journey from King William Island had occupied thirty-four days, but all of this time had not been occupied in travelling. Several days were spent at Cambridge Bay post, and also at Wilmot Island, in connection with the affairs of the Company. Actually over thirty miles per travelling day had been accomplished.

Coppermine is one of the largest settlements on the Western Arctic coast. Besides our own pretentious post, the principal establishments are the government wireless station, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police barracks, and the Anglican and Roman Catholic missions.

Six weeks were spent at the post, during which period the spring advanced slowly towards the short Arctic summer. Situated at the mouth of the Coppermine valley, the settlement is a very pleasant location at this time of the year. As the snow disappears and lays bare the land a profuse vegetation springs to life and the rugged coast line takes on a milder and less stern aspect. Teeming flocks of wild fowl of various species arrive from the south and bring life to innumerable ponds and lakes from which the ice is rapidly disappearing. The river ice, disrupted by the spring freshets, moves down to the sea during the last week in June and salmon fishing becomes the occupation of whites and Eskimos alike. Out from the shore line the blue sea ice will remain solid for another three weeks. Seals bask on its surface and enjoy the heat of the sun. All the snow has by this time melted on its surface to form into innumerable shallow pools and lakes. Tide cracks open gradually and streak the surface far out to sea with narrow canals of open water.

On the 4th of July the first Canadian Airways aeroplane for the season arrived, a new Fairchild monoplane on its maiden flight to the Arctic coast.

By this time of the year ideal summer weather prevails at Coppermine, temperatures ranging from 40° to 60° during the day, with slightly cooler temperatures during the night. The midnight sun circles the sky, and darkness has vanished from the land for a space.

Despite my familiarity with the revolutionized methods of northern travel, it was difficult to realize that here I stood on the Western Arctic coast on 4th July and that within ten days I should be sailing from Montreal, approximately 3500 miles away, for the Eastern Arctic. Before that happened I should travel by air and rail, feel the summer heat of the prairies, and pass through cities which all last winter had seemed so far away.

On 5th of July, amid a rousing send-off from the residents of Coppermine, we took off for Cameron Bay on Great Bear Lake, the first stage of the flight to Edmonton City, Alberta. Rising high above the settlement, the ice-covered expanse of Coronation Gulf stretched to a far horizon, thickly dotted with numerous high rocky islands distorted by mirage. Turning up the Coppermine valley, we passed over Bloody Falls, made memorable through Hearne's epochal journey from Fort Prince of Wales on Hudson Bay 165 years ago. Within an hour we looked down on the first

Left to right: 1, One of the camps made in Queen Maud Gulf while en route for Coppermine. Igloos such as these are built by the Eskimo guides in less than an hour. 2, A small native camp in Simpson Strait. 3, Searching for landmarks from the top of a pressure ridge in Queen Maud Gulf; the picture gives a good idea of the deep and hard packed snow of the Arctic. 4, A halt for a cup of tea at midnight near Coppermine. 5, The aeroplane at Camsell River, Great Bear Lake.

Map showing the fifteen thousand mile journey

Left to right: 1, Back to snow again; Pangnirtung on the eastern Baffin Island coast where there is always snow on the northern slopes. 2, Farther north still; Dundas Harbour on Devon Island where large patches of snow remain the year round. 3, An iceberg in Baffin Bay with a formation reminiscent of the Old Man of Hoy. 4, The Company post at Pangnirtung, with the "Nascopie" lying off the post. 5, Landing natives brought from Dundas Harbour at the site of the new post in Arctic Bay. Here new ice formed rapidly as the temperature dropped and the author was only four hundred miles from his starting point of five months earlier in the Western Arctic, and where he met Eskimo acquaintances from King William Island.

stunted spruce, which increased in size and extent as Great Bear Lake was neared. The barren coastal lands were definitely behind us. In the distance the lake loomed up a great white expanse, with here and there black lanes of water. The main body of water was still ice covered, but the numerous arms and bays were open and free of ice.

Landing at Cameron Bay, the picturesque mining settlement which is set amidst high sloping hills and thickly wooded banks, the afternoon was spent in visiting our Fort Dease post and looking over the town. Our Fairchild soared off repeatedly during the evening with loads of gasoline and equipment for nearby mining camps.

Next morning we took the air early and continued southward for Fort Rae, situated on the north arm of

Great Slave Lake. A strong warm wind was blowing from the south, but the sky remained clear and cloudless.

A landing was made *en route* at Camsell River mining camp, another pitchblende discovery, but work was temporarily suspended and the camp lay in a drowsy quietness.

Continuing the flight and following the long chain of lakes which extended southward to the north arm of Great Slave Lake, the country unrolled itself in an endless system of innumerable lakes of all shapes and sizes. Thick bush and sparse timber covered the land surface, while occasional bleak and bare ridges stood out and dominated the surrounding area.

To the east of the Marian river, a raging forest fire, fanned by the brisk southerly breeze, poured dense columns of smoke towards the sky.

Skirting the smoke area, yellow glimpses of the fire glowed dully through the smoke, presenting a wild and fascinating spectacle from the air.

Passing over an Indian camp at the mouth of Marian river, we flew out over the shallow and muddy waters of the north arm of Great Slave Lake. Soon the tall spire of the church at Fort Rae stood out ahead and we were circling this large and imposing settlement.

Fort Rae is an important trading centre and the gathering place of the Yellowknife Indians. Treaty had been recently paid and the teepees of the visiting band dotted the settlement, presenting a colourful and animated scene.

At Fort Rae the temperatures were noticeably higher, and there was twilight at night, for we had left the midnight sun behind and were well south of the Arctic Circle.

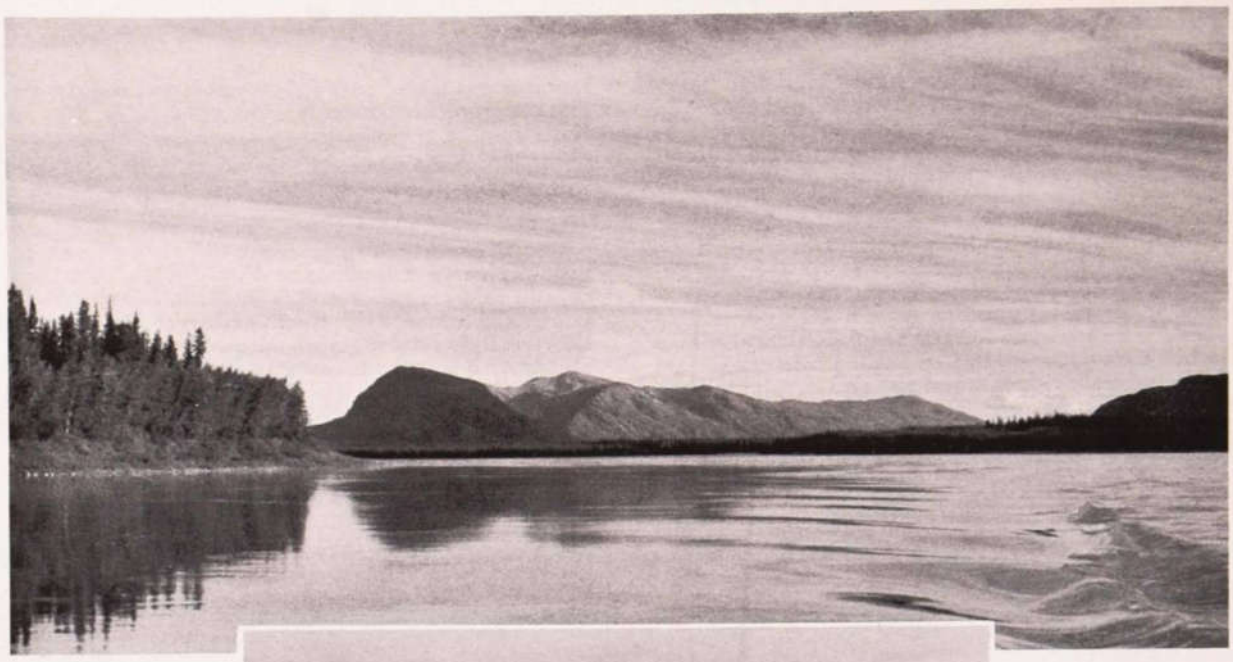
Taking off in the forenoon of the next day in fine clear weather, and skirting the shores of the lake, a landing was made on Yellowknife river, sixty miles distant from Fort Rae. Mining operations were in full swing on the new gold discovery at this point, and the camp presented a scene of well organized activity.

Continuing the flight across the east arm of the lake, we were shortly over Slave river, a broad yellow ribbon of many windings and turns. Evening brought us to a landing at Fort Smith, the trim capital and centre of administration for the Mackenzie River area of the Northwest Territories. Electric lights, telephones, automobiles and trucks, all testified to our nearer approach to civilization. Early in the morning we were in the air and climbing for altitude above the trim townsite. The twelve miles of rapids in the river below quickly passed under us and we were in the province of Alberta as Fort Fitzgerald shot into view. Several tiny craft could be seen below crawling down stream on the sluggish Slave as we flew at a high altitude for Lake Athabasca.

As the lake sprawled beneath us the buildings of Fort Chipewyan came into view. On landing we tied to the bank close by our S.S. *Athabasca*, which was bound up stream for the end of steel.

Taking off after a two-hour stop at Chipewyan, we crossed the lake and picked up the Athabasca river. Following in a direct line its winding course, we rose over banks of low-lying white fleecy clouds to an altitude of ten thousand feet. At this height the craft seemed stationary in the air and far horizons merged over the white clouds in a bluish haze. Fort McMurray came into view below at the junction of the Athabasca and Clearwater rivers, and we descended through the white clouds to a perfect landing in front of the air base.

An electric storm and heavy downpour of rain delayed departure from McMurray until the evening of the following day. [*Continued on page 64*



Above: Mount Camsell, between Fort Simpson and Fort Wrigley.

Left: Bear Rock, with Bear River and Fort Norman just beyond

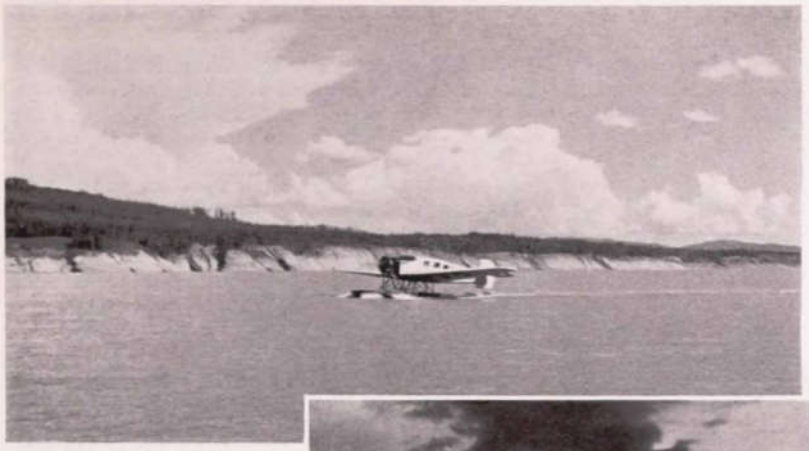
Business in the Arctic

By
M. R. LUBBOCK
Fur Trade Commissioner's Office
Photographs by the Author

Vast areas of land, sharply contrasted types of country, a bewildering number of rivers and lakes and the link of the Company to make a coherent picture—the impression of a boat and air inspection trip in that district of which the Mackenzie river is the central stem

A JOURNEY of 4,850 miles in four weeks—by boat, train and aeroplane—to the Arctic Ocean and back—amongst Indians and Eskimos—over bush, swamp and barren lands. This is not a summary of the wanderings of an exploration party; it is merely that of a routine inspection trip by the Fur Trade Commissioner in 1936.

Of all the districts in the vast area which he administers, the lower Mackenzie and the Western Arctic are amongst the most difficult to cover. Such huge distances are involved, the posts are so widely scattered and in many cases so inaccessible, that without the aeroplane it would hardly be possible for him to visit all the posts. The predominant impression, therefore, of such a trip is of the vast areas of land covered so quickly and in-

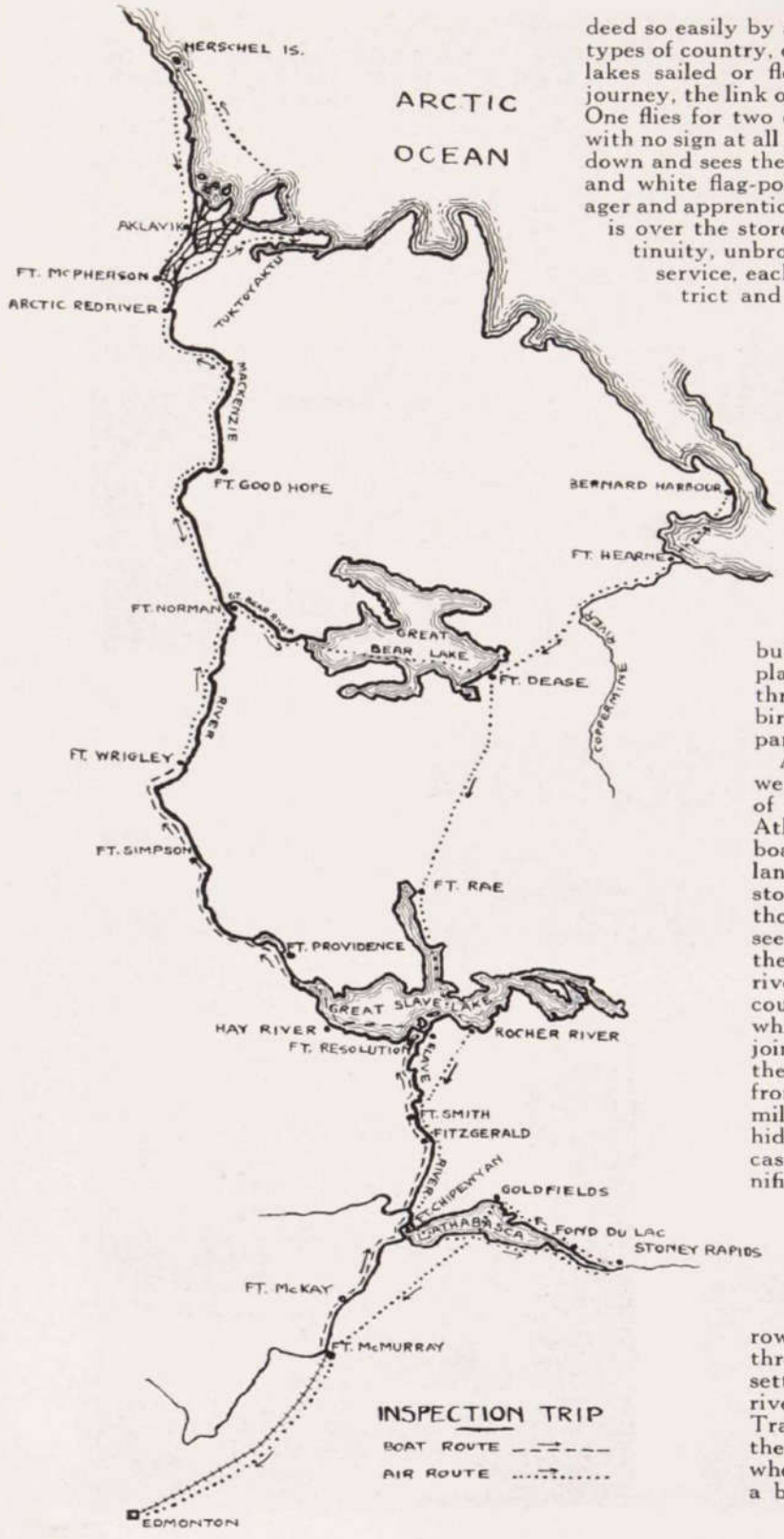


Above: The aeroplane in which the Fur Trade Commissioner travelled during most of his inspection trip.

Below: One of the beautiful sunsets of the North; in this case where the Mackenzie river flows out of Great Slave lake.

Lower right: The stern wheel of the Company vessel "Athabasca River" which works from Waterways to Fort Fitzgerald.

Below: The gateway at Fort Smith, one of the modern Fur Trade posts built on the lines of the stockaded forts of earlier times.



deed so easily by air, of the different and sharply contrasted types of country, of a bewildering number of great rivers and lakes sailed or flown over; and yet, throughout this long journey, the link of the Company to make a coherent picture. One flies for two or three hours over a barren tract of land with no sign at all of a human being. Then suddenly one looks down and sees the familiar pattern of white houses, red roofs and white flag-pole. One lands and is met by the post manager and apprentice, the ensign is hoisted, the well known sign is over the store. Everything gives the impression of continuity, unbroken tradition, and the maintenance of the service, each post playing its part in its isolated district and forming a link in this solid chain which lies almost hidden in the forests of the North.

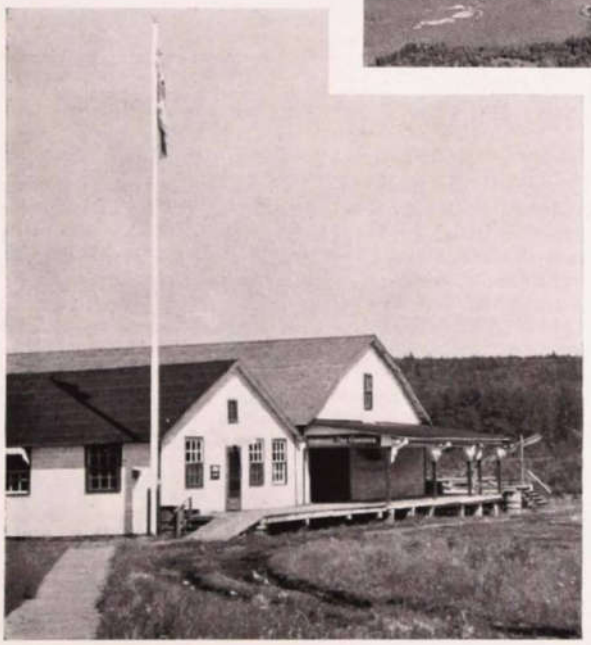
This northern country must be seen and sensed—seen from the air and sensed on the ground—if it is to be properly appreciated. We had nine days on the river and fourteen in the air. During the nine days the view was limited to the trees lining the banks and the posts at which we stopped, but in that time one could soak in the peculiar atmosphere of the forests, the immense rivers and the loneliness. The flying gave one a detached feeling towards the country, but one got some realization of its general plan and proportions, of its main features, through the continuous unrolling of this bird's-eye view at a speed and on a scale comparable with that of the country itself.

A glance back in one's mind at the ground we covered shows up certain broad categories of scene. First come the three great lakes, Athabasca, Great Slave, and Great Bear. In a boat they appear, and indeed are, great inland seas on which one may meet very severe storms. From the air too they are impressive, though possibly more beautiful, since one can see the surrounding country and thus view them in their proper setting. In a way the rivers are the most striking part of the whole country—the Athabasca, the Slave (into which flows the Peace), and the Mackenzie joined by the Liard from the southwest and the Bear from the east. They vary in width from a hundred yards or so to about two miles. Though mostly edged with trees which hide any ground further back, there are occasionally other sights to interest—the magnificent view of the Nahanni and Mackenzie mountains and of rugged Mount Camsell between Fort Simpson and Fort Wrigley; the ramparts just above Fort Good Hope, huge sheer cliffs of white stone enclosing a comparatively narrow channel which the Mackenzie has cut through; and of course the trading posts and settlements which appear round a bend in the river to remind one of civilization and the Fur Trade. One has indeed to be "reminded," for the majestic breadth of the rivers, the overwhelming sense of light and space and sky on a brilliant summer's day, and the absolute

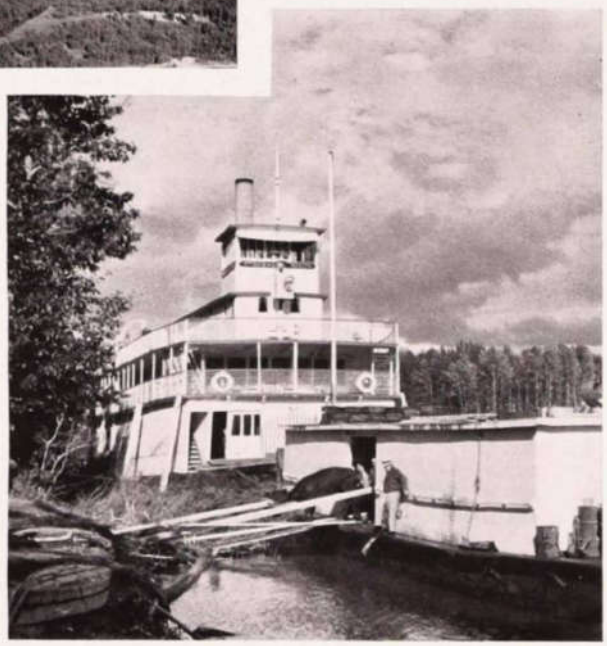
Above: The majestic breadth of the Mackenzie river.

Centre: The great rapids of the Slave at Smith Portage.

Below: The Company buildings at Waterways.



Below: Unloading a cow from the "Athabasca River."



Above, left: The Eskimo family met near Bernard Harbour on the coast line.

Above, right: An Eskimo hunter with his family at Fort Hearne post.

Above, centre: Fort Rae, the Company post on the north arm of Great Slave lake named after the great physician, fur trader, explorer, John Rae.

solitude and wildness for hour after hour, induce a sort of coma which takes one's mind far from routine and cities and hot baths and the mail. From the air the great rivers dominate the view. They seem, as indeed in a sense they are, the central stem of that north country, its backbone and foundation, and everything seems to hang on them and radiate from them.

Almost all the way down the rivers the country is thickly wooded, but everywhere cut up by streams and small lakes of all shapes and sizes. It is a restful view to look at for a length of time, and yet, perhaps for the same reasons, it becomes monotonous. So it is a definite relief to get beyond Aklavik to the delta of the Mackenzie, a vast area of swamp and muskeg, flat, barren, featureless, and yet with an attractive fresh look about it after the endless forests.

Going eastward along Great Bear lake one comes to an entirely different country—continuous rolling, bulbous hills, still cut up by lakes and with lines of trees, but predominantly rocky. This is the country in which to get the full effect of a fine sunset; there are the contours to give the contrasts of light and the ores in the rock to give a kaleidoscopic display as the sun gradually sinks. Northwards again to Coppermine and Fort Hearne, and one reaches the treeless barrens once more, but this time marked with long lines of hills which in almost all cases have their sides scarred and pitted by landslides. We made a short flight northwest from Coppermine to a point on the coast called Bernard Harbour. On this flight we crossed the most desolate area of the whole trip, dead flat, almost more water than land, and the only vegetation a kind of reindeer moss.

One more outstanding memory of the North is colour. There is far more colour in this wilderness than most people might suppose—colour in tree, water, rock and flower. All these take on a vivid

quality, a purity of colouring which is probably due to the unusually clear atmosphere. Lines and shapes are sharper, and inside these clear-cut outlines the colours stand out in striking contrasts. The two most impressive scenes that come to mind were a brilliant sunset at Fort Rae reflected on a heavy thunder-storm—a shimmering curtain of pink water against the blackness of the clouds—and then, while gliding down to Fort Dease, the view below made up of the dark trees, grey, red and mauve rocks and the crystal clear water, green as a flawless emerald.

It was near Bernard Harbour that there took place a scene which curiously joined the old to the new. The plane came down in an inlet to try to get news from an Eskimo family about some boats which had been held up in the ice. This family was by itself a hundred miles from the nearest human being and in a country in which it formed itself the only feature. An old man and his wife, with a girl and a baby, rowed out to the plane and there ensued a curious conversation, compounded on our part of some Baffin Land Eskimo, ingenious signs, and vigorous nodding and pointing. Eventually we extracted from them the required information. It was an odd scene if one stopped for a moment to think of it—four white men in grey flannels descending from the sky in a metal seaplane, accepted apparently as a normal occurrence by this native family living far from any neighbours—and then this conversation conducted with great cordiality on both sides and concluded, though in 1936, in the old traditional manner by the exchange of gifts. Our offerings had to be hastily devised from a few cigars and a box of biscuits, while the old Eskimo presented to us a tongue and a lump of fat off the back of a caribou, which is a much prized delicacy to the natives. All this, accompanied by continual chatter and the broadest grins, was a true and living link with the past, half the actors being, in every detail, of 1936, while the others could have been little different from generations of ancestors.

A journey through the northwest in summer means excellent food. In almost every place one can choose from a variety of the best fresh fish, while in many parts there are wild berries of every kind. Strawberries, raspberries, red currents, grow in profusion and are as good in size and taste as any produced in a southern garden. Curiously enough, it is not the distance north which determines whether flowers and fruit shall grow, for after finding both at various points down the river we met with none for a space and then came on them again still further north. Indeed the finest display of wild flowers anywhere in the North is on Herschel island, off the Yukon coast. There are some three hundred and seventy different varieties, many of them wild ancestors of well known garden flowers.

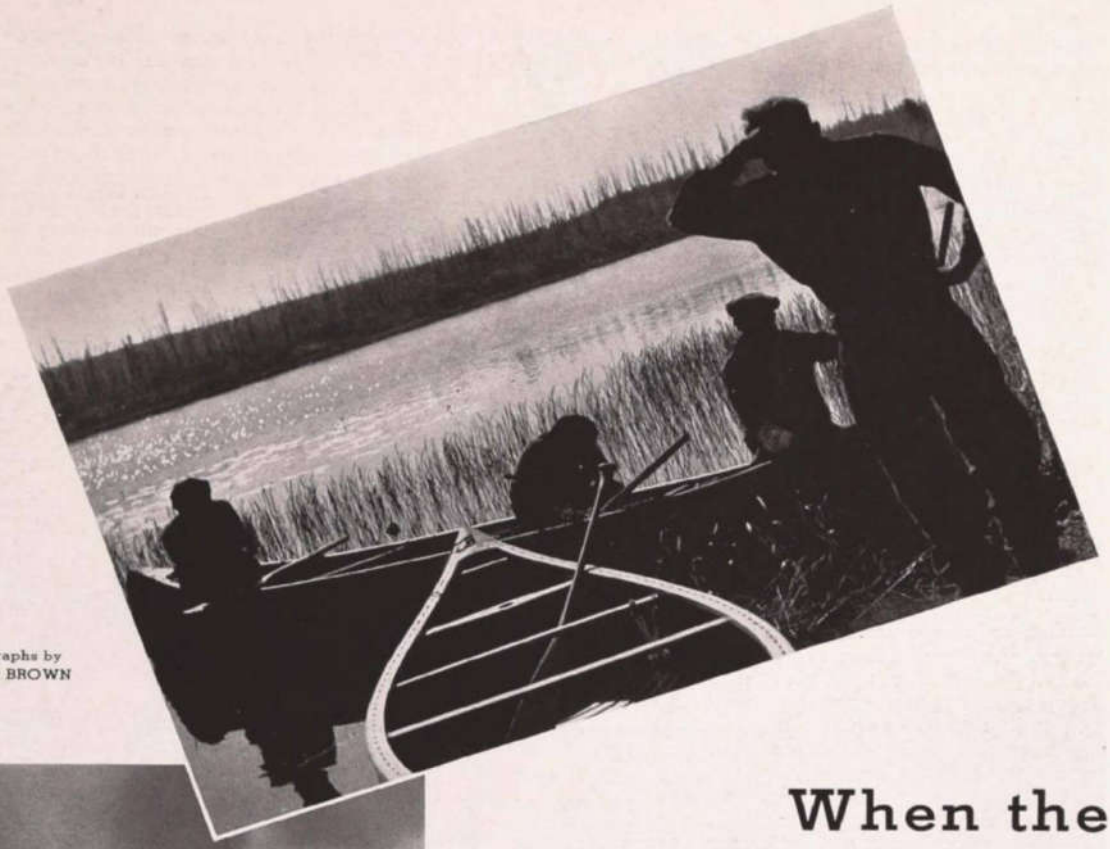
There was little time for fishing on this trip, but rods were brought out for whitefish, grayling, speckled trout, salmon trout, and salmon. In most places local inhabitants assured us that fly-fishing would be worse than useless, but to their discomfiture it succeeded to some extent in every case. Even where a minnow or a plug had to be used it was fun, for a seven-pound salmon trout is an opponent to be respected played on a nine-ounce rod.

Throughout this northern wilderness runs the chain of the Company's posts. But throughout it too run the parallel chains of the R.C.M.P. and the missions. The police buildings are a serious rival to the Company's in the matter of layout and strikingly neat appearance. Constables, corporals, sergeants, inspectors, all are truly part of the North and welcoming friends when one pays them a visit. So too are the missionaries, and to one who has spent altogether but a few short weeks in the North, it was surprising and delightful to find at Aklavik an R.C.M.P. sergeant and an Anglican missionary whom he had first met in 1934 at Moose Factory and Port Burwell. At almost every settlement the eye is caught by the mission church or school or hospital. Schools and hospitals are built with great care and ingenuity to give the finest service, though almost entirely of wood and often built with native labour. Perhaps the most striking building in the North is the Roman Catholic church at Fort Good Hope, a small wooden church built in 1889. At that time the three resident fathers happened to be very fine artists who designed and painted an elaborately carved altar and altar rails, covered the walls with very striking and beautiful frescoes and mural designs (done largely with pigments made from local materials) and painted two large pictures for the chancel which have quite the appearance of the old Italian religious pictures both in design and colouring. The whole interior would be a noticeable achievement in one of the big cities, but in a small northern settlement it is certainly amazing.

Finally, to complete this northern scene there are the doctors of the Indian Department. Theirs is a difficult job to carry through conscientiously and wisely. It is far from being a question of merely watching the natives' health. The advice of these doctors is sought on a wide variety of subjects, and over all is the thorny question of relief. The government is determined that no Indian shall be left in destitution; but at the same time recognizes the great danger proved in many civilized countries of unwittingly encouraging indolence and a complete dependence on free supplies. Let no one envy the doctors their position, but look with admiration on the way they manage their difficult charge.

And what has been said of the Company? Little indeed, for there is little to report, except that operations continue, quietly and unostentatiously, as they have always done. Furs are bought, stores (which in some cases are the shopping centres for considerable numbers of white customers) are run, boats are piloted up and down the great rivers and along the Arctic Coast. In many ways the fur trade has had to change and adapt itself to changing conditions, as in the establishment of posts in new mining centres, where furs hardly enter the picture. But through it all runs the continuity of old customs and traditions which form an unbroken background for the changing scene. To appreciate the Company's position in the North, one must travel through this great country, sail and fly nearly five thousand miles and visit twenty-four posts in the short space of four weeks, and then assuredly the true picture of its essential worth will appear.

Smoothest, Fastest, Quietest
A new stream-lined escalator in the Company's Retail Store at Winnipeg. The most up-to-date customer convenience in Western Canada, the escalator has a carrying capacity, for a smooth noiseless ride to the second floor, of eight thousand customers an hour.



Photographs by
LUCIAN BROWN

Left: The forest fire on Stewart lake from which the party ran. Right: In scorching heat they meet a party of southbound Lansdowne Indians and send a message home to say they are still alive.

When the Weather Went "Screwy"

MARTIN R. BOVEY
Boston

Five American college boys expected to find on the northern Ontario rivers relief from the summer discomfort of New York and Boston. They found sizzling heat, mosquitoes and forest fires which chased them, scorched them, and choked them.

DEAR Daddy, I can swim over my head and I hope you are having a fine time in that cold country. With love from Bill." Perched on the counter of the Hudson's Bay Company store at Cavell, Ontario, I watched beads of perspiration from my forehead spatter on my seven-year-old son's letter.

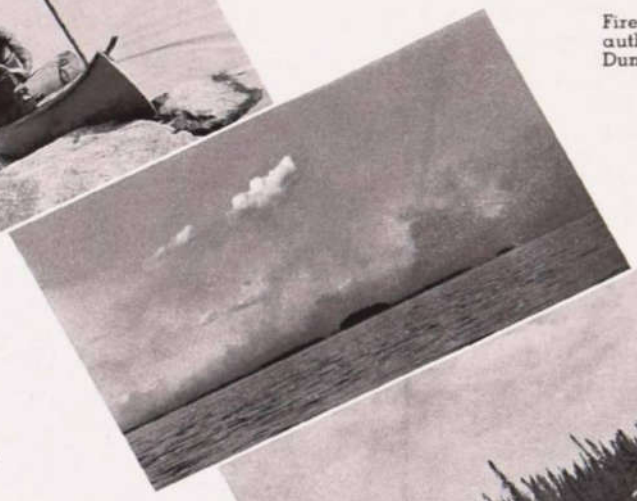
The five American college and preparatory school boys who had come to Cavell as a result of my promises of a month's canoe trip far from the stifling heat of New York and Boston and Minneapolis were slumped on a pile of grub boxes, tents and sleeping bags.

"Certainly glad I brought the woollen underwear you recommended," Johnny Somes said crisply.

"You'll need it," I retorted, slightly worried, but cocksure as ever. "This won't last. You're in Canada now."

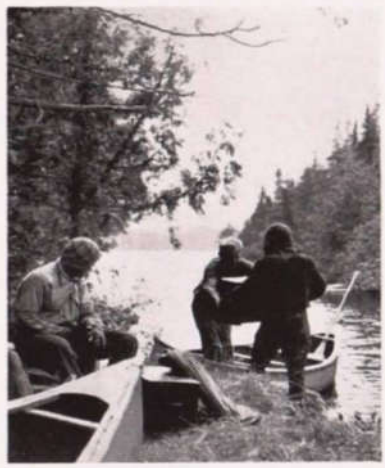
An old-timer sitting on the counter opposite me raised his eyes and looked at me coolly. "Wouldn't be too sure about that. Whole world's gone screwy —wars an' revolutions an' new deals an' the Lord knows what. Guess the weather's gone screwy 'long with everything else. Last year it rained all summer. This year—well, we haven't had a heavy dew since early in June."

Breeden and Duncan loading the "Lily Pad" in smoke-filled Ogoki lake.



Fires on Ogoki lake. Below: The author fishing on the Ogoki with Duncan standing by to assist.

Loading up after a portage en route to Cavell.



The next day was the fifth of July and we were on our way down the Kowkash bound for the Ogoki and Whitefish rivers. Three days later we boiled the kettle on Abamasagi lake. Our proposed route lay up the long bay that stretches northeast to Terrier lake and the regular route to Ogoki lake. But the wind was from that direction and blowing briskly. If one hoisted sail before that tempting breeze one could reach the Ogoki via Meta, Ara and Stone lakes and a part of the Ombabika to Fort Hope route. For three hours we reclined in our canoes and sailed gloriously westward, thumbing our noses at headwinds and all men stupid enough to struggle against them.

But the devil wearing the wings and bearing the harp of an angel was in that wind. All too soon came the end of our lazy sail, and before us stretched waving marsh grass backed by the spruce of muskeg. Somewhere to the west lay Meta lake. With an effort we roused ourselves, unloaded the *Normandie* and the *Lily Pad*, hoisted loads onto our unwilling backs, and plunged into the portage. The heat was overpowering; the black flies unbelievable; the last three hundred yards, where one walked slimy logs laid on waist-deep muck, were appalling. Three loads and three hours later, in a cloud of mosquitoes, we lay on our bellies lapping water from Meta lake and making solemn resolutions that never again would we hearken to the siren call of a fair wind.

That night we hacked a campsite out of a jungle of cedar as the moon rose over Meta lake and late the following afternoon came to the portage that leads to Stone lake.

The land was marred by a five-year-old burn, but the country looked high. According to our map this carry was a mile. Yesterday's affair had been less than that, but we felt that this one would be infinitely easier.

For a quarter of a mile we plowed, heads down, through alder, then toiled up a steep vague trail to lose ourselves in dense young aspen. We brought up other loads while our guides, George Carey of Moose Factory and Duncan Nabigan of Longlac, searched for the trail. With axes ringing we moved the essentials as far as a high rock in the desolation of brule and made a dismal camp.

Thus far we had experienced only heat that fatigues one quickly. Now we were to learn what it is to work under conditions such as even our guides had never experienced.

By the time we had finished breakfast next morning, our campsite was sizzling hot. The leaves of the young aspen drooped in the breathless air. In the alder swamp to which the portage dropped beyond our rock, the heat was unspeakable. One by one we threw down our loads and reeled back to collapse in the broiling shade of the fly we had left standing at our campsite. Only one or two of us had reached the end of the portage on this first attempt. I had got a mere three hundred yards with my load, but it was eight hours before I was able to sit up again. Morrison and Hobbs lay beside me during much of the day, and Duncan was on his back under the *Lily Pad* for several hours. In the midday heat only Somes and George Carey felt up to boiling the kettle and opening a tin of corned beef.

Working when they could, those least affected by the heat got the smaller of the canoes and the most necessary things in our outfit through the portage and, leaving Morrison and Hobbs and me under the fly, shoved a mile up Stone lake and made camp. At sunset, after a violent thunder storm which brought but negligible relief from the heat, we walked to the end of the portage, Clint and Bill carrying very light loads, I only a paddle, and were taken to camp in the *Lily Pad*.

Next day we lay under the fly in heat so intense that the slightest exertion left us utterly limp. Late in the morning, when Duncan had been missing from camp for several hours, we discovered him sitting in the lake, naked except for his hat. When an Indian takes to the water the world has indeed come to a pretty pass.

We were playing bridge in the afternoon when a great dirty yellow cloud rolled up behind our camp and the smell of smoke drifted to us. Then to the east across the lake a thin black column rose in the lifeless air, and to the south, somewhere beyond the portage, another whisp appeared. This then was the aftermath of yesterday's thunder storm, which had been but as a dash of water on the lid of a red hot stove.

The *Normandie* was still at the end of that ghastly portage, and we had duffel scattered all through the carry. Until the sun was lower it was out of the question to go back into the steaming muskeg, so we sat and watched the smoke billow up behind us and the columns across the lake grow thick and sinister.

It was dusk when we returned to camp from the portage, and the evening battle with mosquitoes was at its height, but that carry was behind us—for all time, we swore—and the sun gone until morning.

This being our first experience with forest fires, we were nervous; so we kept watch through most of the night lest a wind blow up from the west.

We moved north next morning, and by a short portage and a small creek reached the narrow body of water called Stewart lake. Off to the left of our course rose the smoke of a fire, but it seemed a safe distance away. Then suddenly heavy smoke filled the air, and the sun became a blood-red ball. From behind the poplar covered hill to the west of the lake, smoke shot skyward in gigantic geysers of black and yellow and purple.

Close to the eastern shore of Stewart lake lay a tiny island bare of vegetation save for grass and willows. Here we would be safe whatever happened.

We waded ashore with the grub box, eager to boil the kettle. Then a blast of air, dry as the air from a kiln and superheated, struck us, and scorched spruce needles fell upon us.

"Better beat it for the Kapikotongwa," someone said. But, even as Duncan was replacing the grub box in the *Lily Pad*, what had been but a grey streamer marking a fire apparently miles north of the river became, in a moment of mounting wind, a terrifying uprush of black smoke. Perhaps this fire was really between us and the river!

"We better stay right here—in the water, if necessary," I declared.

That we would be safe on the island, with a third of a mile of open water between us and the western shore, I did not doubt for a moment, until I noticed Duncan, who was squatting on a rock watching the two fires. Duncan had worked several times with the fire fighters, and hence his opinion should be worth something. Now his eyes were dilated, his lips quivering.

The "Lily Pad" on the Ogoki.

"Think we'll be o.k. here, Dunc?" I asked, and realized that I, too, was scared—scared blue, green, pink.

Duncan's answer came in a whisper. "We'll roast!"

"The smoke would be too bad, even if we got in the water," George declared. "We better get back to Stone lake."

I hesitated. It meant four miles through the narrowest part of the lake and up a creek that was just a ribbon of water in a forest of unbroken spruce. Should we risk being trapped in the creek or caught in suffocating smoke on the portage?

And then we heard the roar of fire sweeping through green conifers. It came on a blast of withering wind, and I knew that we must run for the broad expanse of Stone lake whatever the risk.

In the shallow water around the island we sank our boxes of canned goods and our extra tent, dumped our reserve supply of flour, sugar and oatmeal on the island itself, and started. For a mile the smoke and heat were oppressive, the water covered with singed spruce tips. Then the air grew fresher, and gradually, as I paddled furiously with lowered head, it dawned on me that we were bucking a head wind, that it was blowing more from the south than from the west, that we were safe.

On a sand beach in Stone lake we camped and swam, watched the smoke of seven fires, saw the shores grow dim as the wind went down with the sun and the smoke settled. We stayed four days on Stone lake, moving camp each day as the wind shifted from south to west, to east and back to west. We kept watches all night, ashore or in a canoe, and saw the sky red with reflected flames. The third day a fire reached the shore near the end of the portage on which we had camped.

We were soon bored with Stone lake and the wall-eyed pike, which we caught *ad infinitum*, and were impatient to be on the trout waters of the Ogoki.

Observation had taught us that the fires died down at night with the wind and flared up again about ten in the morning. George and Duncan were as eager to be on the move as we were and suggested that we might safely reach the Ogoki by travelling at night.

We started late in the afternoon, picked up the stuff we had dumped on Stewart lake—which was untouched by the fire that had caused our rout—boiled the kettle at dusk, and came to the Kapikotongwa. In the black of a starless, windless night we sped upstream, the canoes running like greyhounds against the sluggish current. By a flashlight we read the map and kept our bearings, for even by day Makoki creek is easily missed.

Suddenly there was smoke in the air, growing steadily heavier, a blanket of smoke that hid the glow of the fire and gave no accurate clue to its location.

I said, "Sit as low as you can. Keep your heads down, and paddle slowly. If you feel it's getting you, say so. We must be in shape to back out. Let's go!"

In the smoke ahead appeared a vague spot of light, like the glow of a lantern through dense fog, and before the run of our canoes had died we were in the fire. On both sides of the river it was burning, smoldering in the moss of the muskeg, with now and then a quick spurt of bright orange as a small spruce flamed up and went out. High above us a bright red star burned in the cloudy sky—the glowing top of a big spruce. We passed it and the air was clear, the fire behind us, but off to the north the sky was ablaze where the fire raged on a three-mile front.

Through the islands in a widening of the river we groped our way, came to another widening, checked the map with the compass, shoved the bow of the *Lily Pad* through a fringe of rushes, and heard them whine along the sides of the *Normandie* as she followed us into Makoki creek.

The creek was so small, the water so low, that speed was impossible. So we took turns sleeping and working the canoes, wriggling them through the rocks of Makoki creek.

Strange, rather glorious, that delightful half-conscious state when one slumped in the bottom, wrapped in a tarp, a grub bag for a pillow, feeling the canoe being twisted from side to side, hearing the click of poles or paddles against rocks and the bowman's crisp "Left. Right." or "Back her off."

Just before dawn we halted for coffee and bannock and jam, then pushed on to camp at sunrise on a point in the small lake at the top of the creek, the only place between Stone lake and the Ogoki where we felt one would be even reasonably safe in a fire.

We awoke a couple of hours later to find the lake blanketed with smoke blowing down on a gale from the west. Our immediate course lay west over one long and one short portage and the small lakes that lead to Frog creek, down which we must twist and turn between close-set walls of spruce to the Ottertail.

The young birch at our campsite were yellow from drought; the blueberry bushes withered and brown; the whole country tinder waiting for a spark to turn it into a roaring inferno. Behind us fire raged near the Kapikotongwa, and ahead of us—was it two or twenty miles—fire was driving towards us on the wind.

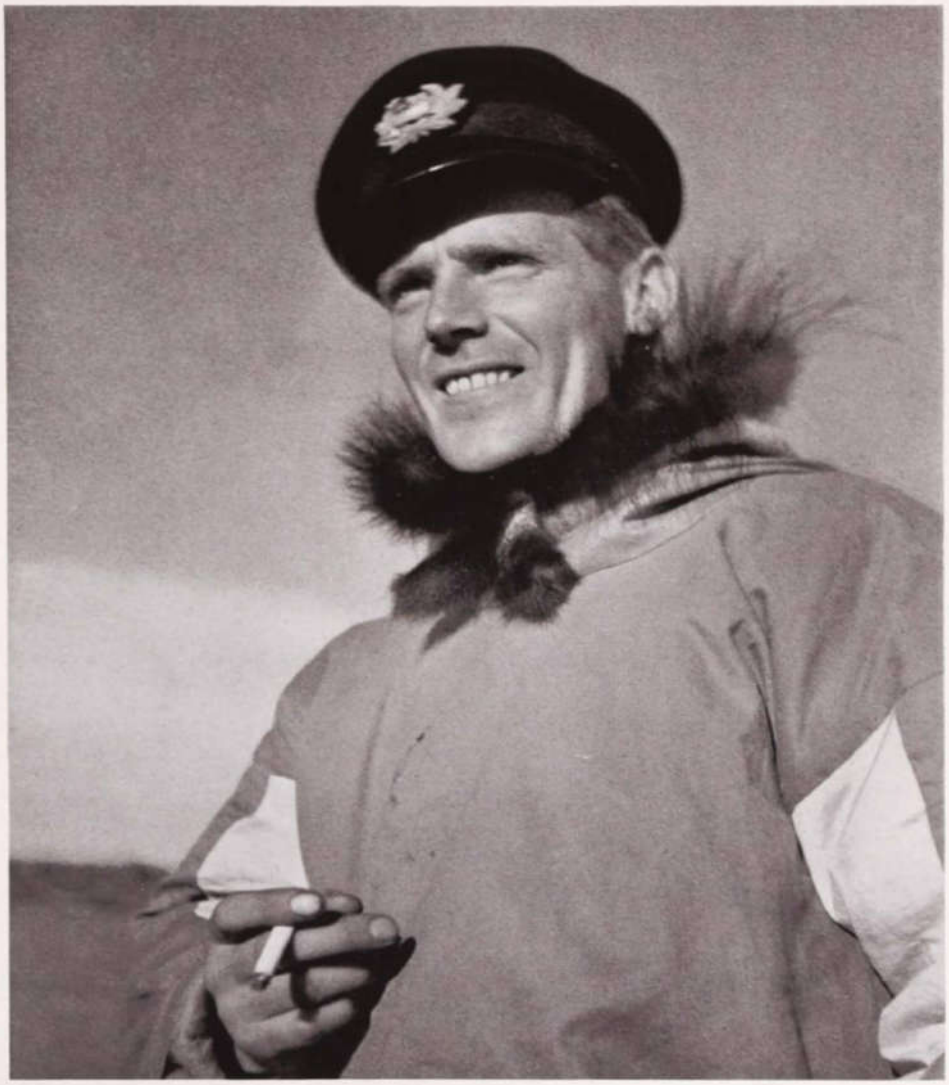
Impulse prompted us to make a dash for the Ogoki, down which we could run for the genuine safety of Ogoki lake. Anything seemed better than lying idle waiting for the fire to sweep down upon us. But reason told us we could not risk being trapped on one of the portages or in Frog creek. And so we stayed, trying to sleep, but raising our heads every few moments to see if the visibility were better or worse.

Late in the afternoon the wind showed signs of abating, so we had supper and started. We worked like demons on the fifty-chain portage, took the eight-chain carry on the run, and were over it by dark. Thinking even the American papers might have mentioned the fires, I left a note for the Company's manager at Ombabika and a telegram for my wife on a stick at the end of the last portage. Possibly some south-bound voyageur would carry the messages to the track.

Down Frog creek we went, two men sleeping in each canoe, the others pulling, prying, pushing with their paddles to negotiate [*Continued on page 65*

From the Western Arctic

A Series of Pictures taken for
The Beaver by Richard N. Hourde



HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY TRADER

Ernest Riddell, the Company's post manager at Herschel island, on the Arctic coast near the Alaskan boundary.

A seal bobbed his black head to the surface to take a look at the Eskimo boat. He stayed up just one second too long.

A white whale is below the waves, and as the boat draws alongside the native stands ready to thrust the harpoon deep into its back.

Now and again the native hunter draws his boat up on the ice. There he sits smoking, with his rifle ready, watching for the tell-tale ripple of a seal in the water.

The native chief has returned from a two-day hunt in the Beaufort Sea, and his wife and son cut up the valuable white whale catch.

THE ESKIMOS

The hunting pictures on these two pages show how contact with traders has made the Eskimo a more resourceful hunter. The technique has changed little since the days when the native used only those weapons which he made himself, but the rifle, schooner and boat with the outboard motor have made his life less precarious. Since the Eskimos are mostly coast dwellers, their whole life has been the snatching of a livelihood from the ice-strewn waters, and the abundance of seals and whales means to them what a good crop means to the farmer. In the lower picture of the opposite page is an excellent example of how the white man's products have helped the Eskimos. In this case the man is using the native harpoon, but a strong rope has replaced the original uncertain line of hide.

GREY NUNS

Familiar figures on the Mackenzie are the Grey Nuns of Montreal. Out of the morning mist the *Distributor* pulls into the dock at Fort Resolution with the first supplies of the year for the Indian school maintained by the nuns. The arrival of the boat is an event in the school year and nuns and pupils alike hurry to the dock.

R.C.M.P.

The stetson hats and scarlet tunics of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police are known to every native along the Mackenzie and in the Western Arctic. Policemen, game wardens, customs officers, justices of the peace and coroners, there is little of the Arctic and sub-Arctic life which is not touched by their duties. In this picture Sergeant Covell, as he is now, and Constable Moore consider the possibilities of a mid-summer night's entertainment.

THE CALENDAR

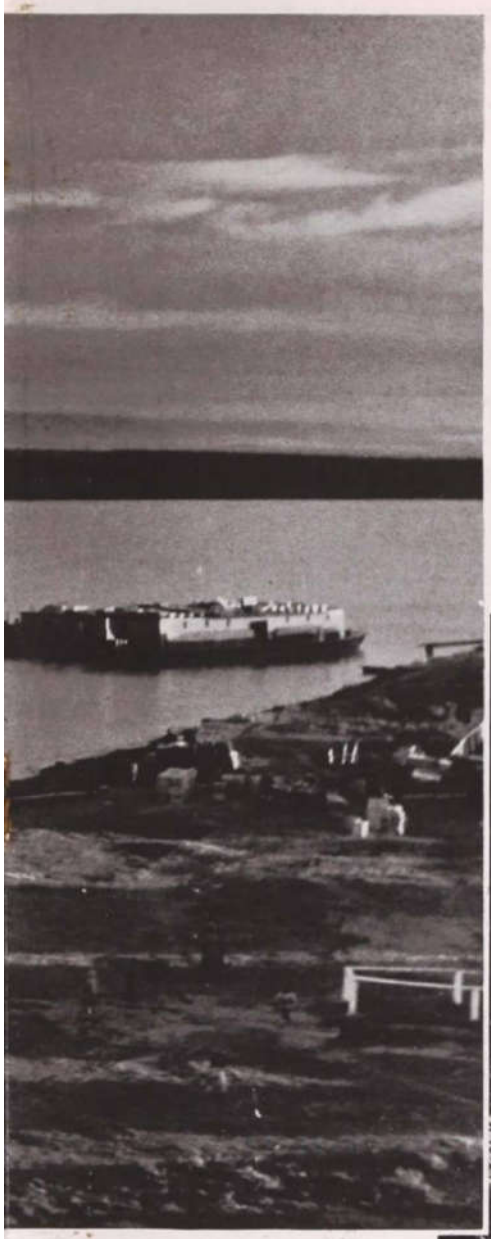
The Company's calendar is probably the most popular piece of interior decoration in Western and Northern Canada. It finds wall space in offices, barber shops, school rooms, country stores and farm house kitchens, and not a few are hung in the place of honour in the homes of the less nomadic Eskimos of the Western Arctic. The calendar plays an important part in their lives and one of the daily chores is keeping the calendar up to date by striking out the previous day. Monday, the fifth, may mean little up there, but the number of days until Christmas is a matter of importance to men, women and children. Here a Baillie Island native examines his new calendar which, incidentally, he receives in August.

The "Distributor" at the end of her 1300-mile voyage down the Mackenzie river. Ahead o
taken by the light of the midnight sun. In the distance is the northern extre

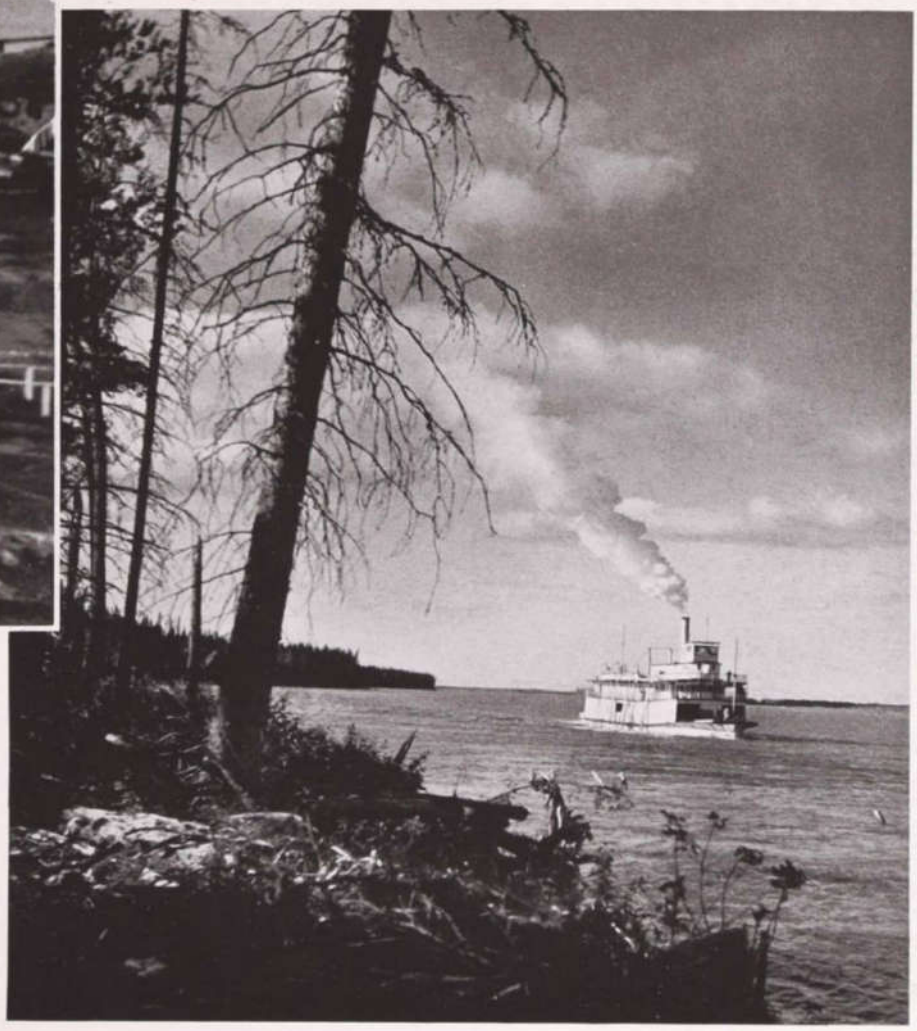
Johnny Berens at the helm of the "Distributor." He has been a river pilot since the first steamboat appeared on the river fifty years ago.

S.S. "DISTRIBUTOR"

Three times a year the Company's vessel, S.S. *Distributor*, pushes her barges down to the Arctic and then makes a return journey up-stream against the powerful current. No matter what the weather, her whistle brings the whole population of each settlement to the edge of the bank. While she is at the dock side it's the old story of the North—supplies go ashore, on board goes fur and other country produce, friendships are renewed, for everyone knows everybody else down the river, and tourists scramble to get pictorial records of everything.



r lie her barges. The photograph was
of the Rocky Mountains.



The "Distributor," minus her usual barges, making full speed against the current of the Slave river.

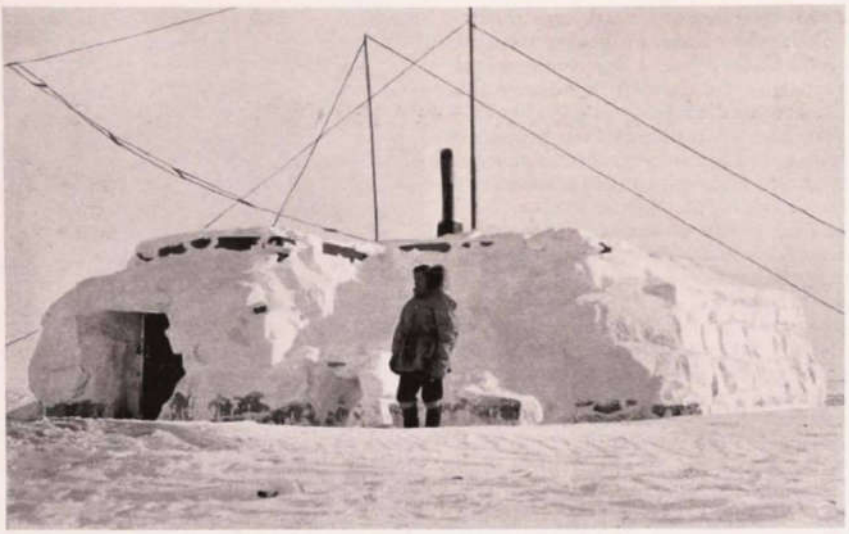
Arctic Christmas

By
RICHARD FINNIE
Ottawa

Above: 1, Music for the dance of the Copper Eskimos, Coronation Gulf. 2, A chance meeting on the sea ice. 3, Moving day in Coronation Gulf. Top right: Haiskok, who was one of the Christmas visitors. She is wearing the traditional caribou skin costume.

Preconceived ideas about chilly cheerless Christmases near the North Pole were all wrong. Mr. Finnie found a great deal of fun of an unusual sort when he spent a Christmas Day at Coppermine, Northwest Territories

WITH compassion welling up in my little breast I read somewhere in my early youth that dwellers in the Arctic, unable because of their unfortunate environment to prepare for Christmas in an orthodox manner, compromised by fashioning a tree out of whalebone and hanging on it blubber bon-bons. These were distributed to the fur-clad children, who munched them with an enjoyment I was sure I could never share. All the polar clan then joined shiveringly in the singing of carols and spent the rest of the day in their ice-houses, wrapped in bearskins to keep from freezing to death.



The author's headquarters at Coppermine. It was here that the Eskimos heard themselves addressed in their own language from the loudspeaker.

Santa Claus, though residing in the vicinity, was too busy delivering presents in more southerly climes to bother leaving any for his neighbours. All in all they had a pretty hard time of it, and I felt sorry for them indeed. Much less doubting the accuracy of this picture, I never entertained the possibility that within a few years I would find out just how they really did celebrate Christmas—through the expedient of spending a Christmas with them myself.

As special investigator for the Canadian government I was making my winter headquarters at the little settlement of Coppermine, Coronation Gulf, on the Arctic coast midway between Hudson Bay and Alaska. Strung out along the bleak shore were a half dozen frame houses of imported lumber, belonging respectively to the Roman Catholic and Anglican missions, the Hudson's Bay Company, the government medical depot and the wireless station.

It was the 20th of December and the inhabitants, numbering less than a dozen white men, were preoccupied with thoughts of Christmas—not so much for what it was going to mean to them now, perhaps, as to what it had meant in the past in company with friends and relatives thousands of miles away. But there was little time for sentimentalizing as, in addition to routine tasks, preparations had yet to be made for the reception of visitors. Scores of Eskimo families from the islands to the north, from capes and bays on the coast and from seal-hunting camps on the frozen sea, were known to be on their way to the settlement to hold a yule-tide reunion. Until a few years ago, of course, these people had no knowledge of Christmas, and in fact they had no precise means of reckoning time whereby they could arrange to foregather on an appointed date. The influence of the white men had altered this situation. Nearly every Eskimo family now had a calendar upon which each day was carefully marked off; and they were aware, at least in one respect, of the significance of Christmas—it was a day of feasting and merrymaking for the whites, in which they too might join. And so they were *en route* to Coppermine, their dogs straining at the traces of sleds piled high with all manner of household goods, furs, seal oil and meat. While the adults broke trail and helped in harness with the dogs, the children rode on the sleds or pattered gaily alongside.

Meanwhile the two rival missions were making ready their special supplies of biscuits, jam and tea and other dainties with which they hoped to entice the natives to masses and services. The trading post manager was taking an inventory of his goods and getting the store in shape to do business. At the medical depot the doctor, a slightly homesick young Scotsman, was concerned in his yule-tide preparations neither with soul saving nor trade; he was merely determined to maintain the traditions of his race as well as circumstances permitted. First of all, he wanted a Christmas tree. Such a thing had never been seen on the barren coast of Coronation Gulf, but that did not deter him. He dispatched a native servant with sled and dog team, instructing him to proceed inland to the northern limit of wooded country, there to cut a spruce tree and bring it back to the settlement. The previous winter the doctor had ordered, through the Hudson's Bay Company, a collection of toys and candy, which had subsequently been delivered in the open season by the annual supply ship. These he brought down from the attic and unpacked. On the following day the native arrived from a non-stop trip to the interior. The tree he had picked out was symmetrical and of just the right height, and it became an object of amused curiosity when the doctor had got it set up in the living room and decorated with glass balls, festoons and candles.

Over at the wireless station, when not sending out weather reports to civilization, the operators

baked batches of bread and undertook mysterious culinary experiments. They had issued a general invitation to the white colony for Christmas dinner.

By the 24th nearly two hundred Copper Eskimos—men, women and children—had assembled at the settlement. None of us had seen so many people at once for a long time. Aside from differences in speech and costume and equipage, they might have been delegates to a convention. Theirs was a spirit of good-fellowship; they joked and laughed and sang. In this case, however, despite the absence of hotels, there was no accommodation problem to deal with. While the women unloaded the sleds the men set to work on the fringe of the sea-ice cutting blocks from the wind-packed snow and constructing commodious igloos. And contrary to my storybook information, all these were of snow, not ice.

It required but an hour or two to finish the igloos and furnish them with deerskin bedding, numerous knick-knacks and the stone seal-oil lamps which served a three-fold purpose—heat, light and cooking. The Eskimos then started, according to a custom they had developed, to go the rounds of all the white men's dwellings, staying at each one long enough to negotiate a feed of hard-tack and tea.

To the Hudson's Bay Company's store the hunters brought their fox pelts—whites, crosses, silvers and reds—which they had accumulated since freeze-up. The post manager, good-humoured and patient, allowed his customers to deliberate as much as they wished over the choosing of goods, but diplomatically tried to discourage purchases of golf sweaters, novelty jewelry, silk underwear and the like, recommending instead food, tools and ammunition as being more useful. Easily exploited by the unscrupulous, the Eskimos, though intelligent, are often child-like and unpractical.

Their trading finished, some of the Eskimos wound up at the wireless station. Having been in operation for only a few months, this was a source of wonderment to the visitors who were not habitues of the settlement. The big gasoline driven generators that started and stopped at the turn of a switch evoked gasps of admiration. But

Broadcasting on Christmas Day from radio station VBK. The author on the right.

the chief attraction was the electric lights. How, asked the Eskimos, was it possible to build within glass bottles a fire that could be lit or extinguished without being touched? Common sense explanations were waved aside. It was quite obvious that this was a specimen of the white men's witchcraft, which, though different, was really not so remarkable as the feats of Eskimo medicine-men, who could see through a mountain or fly to the moon.

Hoping to arrange a "miracle" that would impress our guests more favourably, I went into a hasty conference with the wireless operators and a sophisticated western Eskimo who was sometimes employed as interpreter. Then I adjourned to my own quarters, followed by a crowd of Eskimos, whom I instructed to listen carefully as the radio receiving set was switched on. A popular dance tune blasted forth. This was not out of the ordinary: to them it was a phonograph, a queer contrivance that sometimes talked, but only in an incomprehensible language. They waited politely and shuffled their feet. Suddenly the music stopped. It was replaced with a voice which said: "Hello Aivik. Hello Keenuktuk. Hello Ikpuckhuak . . ." Everyone in the room was called by name. Well, here was something worthy of attention—a phonograph that spoke intelligibly! The Eskimos exchanged startled glances. The voice addressed them in their own tongue, explaining that its owner was right in the room with them but defied them to find him. A little diffidently some of the Eskimos peered into the horn, others opened the radio cabinet and still others looked under the table. One of them, a discerning young fellow, at last exclaimed: "Oh, I know who was speaking to us. It is Aviuk the westerner. He is trying to fool us. Over at the other house the white men are sending out his voice by means of the magic wires, which is being caught in this horn."

Leaving the room, the youth raced to the wireless station to confirm his theory, and returned wearing a broad grin. He told his fellows what he had seen. They all laughed heartily. Disclosure of the fact of their having been able to identify the voice of Aviuk coming from the loudspeaker while the man himself was a quarter of a mile away did not overawe the Eskimos in the slightest degree. That was just more parlour magic. On the other hand they had found out that Aviuk was in one place when he claimed to be in another. All of which, according to the native logic, constituted an expose of our miracle. So the joke was on us.

It was Christmas day. The trading post apprentice had been prevailed upon to masquerade as Santa Claus. When the guests had

all arrived at the medical depot he made his entrance wearing a false beard and a conventional Santa Claus costume of scarlet flannel. The children screamed with fright, while the men and women drew back shyly to make way for this peculiarly accoutred stranger. They had been told that a benevolent white man who lived at the North Pole was to pay a call, but this man, they felt, could hardly be he. Why, he was not even wearing furs, though the temperature was forty degrees below zero, and his boots were not of moose-skin! This was not the proper attire for a dweller in the Far North. The impersonation lasted for only a few minutes. Then the apprentice's beard half fell off and his face was recognized amid shouts of merriment. Undaunted, he began handing out the gifts: raisins and candy to everybody, pocket-knives to the boys and, of all things, handkerchiefs to the girls. This was the doctor's idea of a joke. Eskimos have already adopted some of the niceties of civilization, but if a time comes when they start using handkerchiefs it will symbolize an utter loss of self-respect!

A few of the whites who had come to ridicule the doctor's Christmas party (they thought it would be absurd) were shortly captured by the spirit of revelry. Each of them persuaded a raven-haired fur-clad damsel to try a fox-trot with him as the radio was tuned to a static-free dance programme from New York. The younger women, and even some of the more matronly ones carrying babies on their backs, seemed to have a sense of rhythm quite equal to that of any metropolitan debutante. An example having been set, the native men themselves were soon fox-trotting, executing a variety of steps that were original if not always graceful. And as they were all wearing moccasins it really didn't matter if one trod on his partner's toes now and then.

The thought flashed across my mind that here was an anachronistic situation. Through the witchery of science a group of people who literally belonged to the stone age were dancing to the latest Broadway tune, yet somehow there was little inappropriateness about it; it was rendered aesthetic by the basic primitiveness of American jazz, and the Eskimos took to it naturally and with evident enjoyment.

At five p.m. when we entered the wireless station our nostrils were assailed by a conglomeration of appetizing odours. It had been rumoured that the dinner was to be of exotic character, but no details had been learned. Menus were now given out, and listed thereon were potage ptarmigan, filet of Arctic salmon, fried white fox and Greenland hare a la king, roast snowy owl and giblets of seal, caribou steak, canned vegetables and plum pudding. "We should consider ourselves especially privileged," someone remarked. "What swell restaurant anywhere in the world could duplicate this assortment?"

The meal progressed splendidly until the final course, when the doctor ruefully directed attention to the absence of brandy to burn on the pudding. Astonished eyes were fixed upon him, for he was known to be an ardent prohibitionist. "Well, what can we do about it?" he was asked. "So far as we know, there isn't a drop of anything stronger than ice-water around Coronation Gulf. But if there were, we'd have located it." [*Continued on page 65*

Ikpuckhuak starts on the passageway, having finished the igloo proper.

Ikpuckhuak has nearly finished the first tier of his igloo in Coronation Gulf.

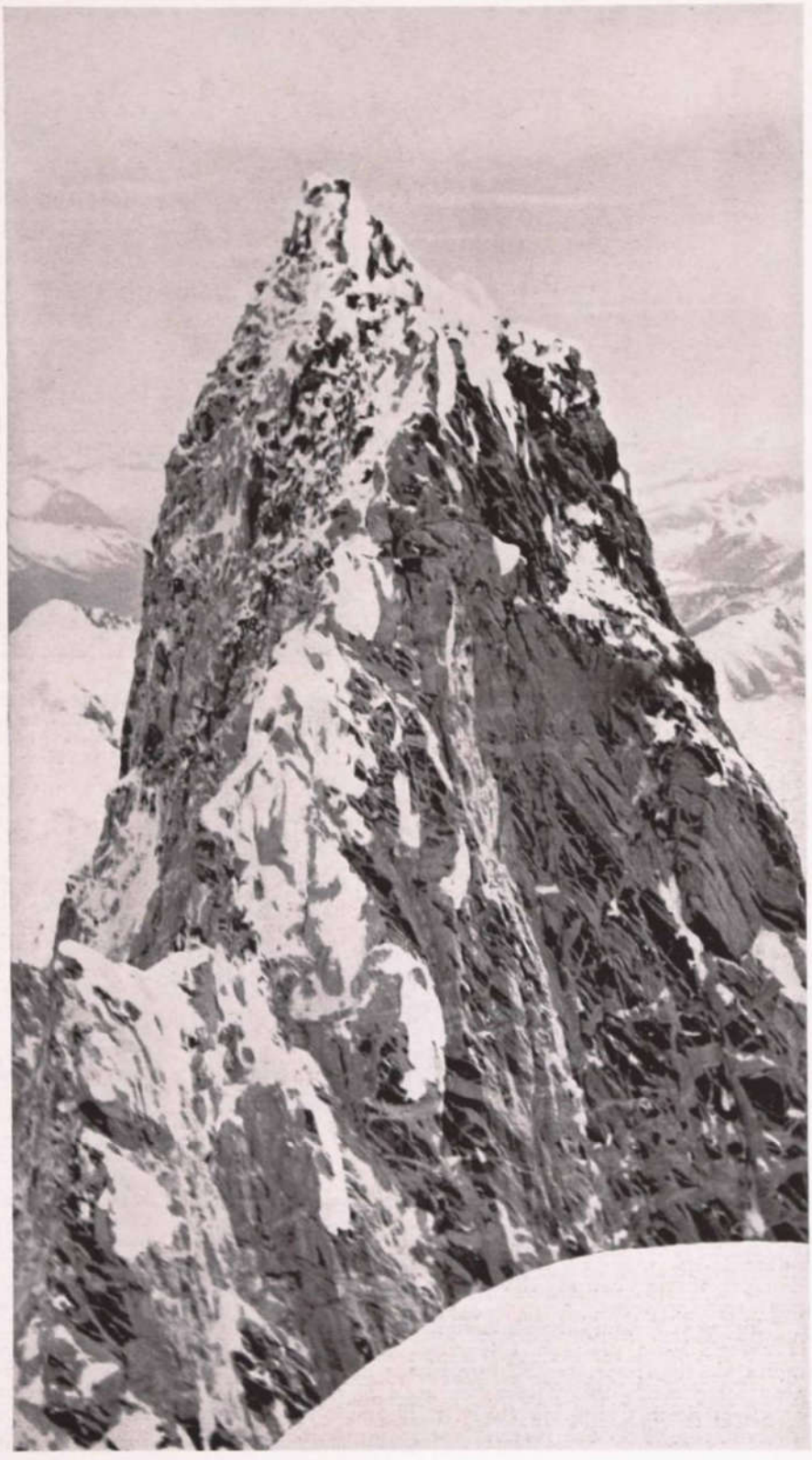
The Conquest of Mount Waddington

By D. L. GILLEN
Vancouver
Photographs by the Author

Mount Waddington, a 13,000-foot peak in British Columbia and one of the most difficult rock and snow peaks in the world, was climbed for the first time this year. Mr. Gillen, of the Company's Vancouver store staff, took an active part in the expedition and in his article tells of the hazards of such a venture

MOUNT Waddington is to be tackled again." This statement set mountaineering circles throughout the continent buzzing with excitement. Every man who had experienced the thrill of climbing some great peak hoped against hope that he might have the opportunity of joining this new expedition, even though the chances were a hundred to one against getting in on the

The final 800 feet of Mount Waddington's main pinnacle taken from the north peak. It is this peak which was conquered last summer, and which is considered one of the world's most difficult climbs.



Eight miles from the snout on Franklin Glacier, up which the party packed 1200 pounds of supplies en route to Mount Waddington. Marvel Glacier is in the background.

Mount Vigilant and Dauntless Glacier from the camp of July 20th. The lake is the one in which the climbers bathed. Left: Picking up the last relay load at Marvel Glacier cache.

adventure. But it was worth a try. The headquarters of the British Columbia Mountaineering Club, sponsor of the Canadian section, was besieged with letters of application. No one gave a thought to the privations and dangers of the venture: the thrill of conquering such a peak was too great.

This great Waddington, known as Mystery Mountain, is a forbidding pinnacle estimated at 13,260 feet; a mountain that had already claimed one man's life. Situated some thirty miles from the head of Knight Inlet on the British Columbia coast, it is one of the most difficult climbs on the North American continent.

The Waddington district was first explored in 1928 by Don Munday, who is a pioneer mountain climber and a recognized authority on British Columbia mountains. Before Munday's exploration the mountain had been brought to the attention of the public on account of its apparently elusive location. The peak was definitely located on the map, but two peaks of similar structure and altitude had often been reported from passing ships. Passengers on coastwise boats had seen this great peak on their way north, then perhaps on the return journey they would see what seemed to be the identical peak in a totally different location. Hence the name "Mystery Mountain."

Don Munday was intrigued and made his first exploration to clear up the mystery. He came to the conclusion on this trip that the huge peak, which towered above any other mountain in the surrounding district, was climbable. A little later he reversed this opinion, but only after he had ascended the north peak. This peak, although only sixty feet lower than the main summit, could be climbed entirely on snow, while what appeared to be the only route up the main peak was the 3000-foot rock wall which composed the south face. Subsequent explorations led him

Above: A view from the peak of Vigilant which gives an idea of the difficult country and dangerous crevasses. In the middle distance is Franklin Glacier. Right: Packing up from Icefall Point.

to believe the main summit to be unconquerable. This fact naturally brought Mount Waddington to the attention of mountaineers throughout the world, and, though several expeditions were made, all attempts to discover a practical route to the summit were unsuccessful.

Early in 1936 the challenge of the mountain was again taken up by a party of Canadians and Americans. Six men from the United States were sponsored by the Sierra Club (which organization had sponsored an attempt in 1935). The Canadian section, sponsored by the British Columbia Mountaineering Club, was composed of three members of the club, one member of the Alpine Club of Canada, another young chap who had accompanied me on many of my previous climbs and myself.

Plans were carefully laid and completed, and on the morning of July 1st the advance party embarked on the forty-seven-ton cruiser *Tranquilla*. The personnel of this group was made up of three Americans—Hervey Vogue and Jack Riegelhuth, alternate first-rope climbers; Ken Adams, second-rope climber—and four Canadians—Ken Austin and myself, second-rope climbers; Don Baker, packer; and Bill Taylor, geologist.

On the afternoon of July 2nd we reached the mouth of the Franklin River after a very damp journey from Vancouver. Having made the boat fast we proceeded to unload our twelve hundred pounds of supplies. It takes a lot of macaroni and lentils to feed sixteen husky men for a month! Of course the load included tents, ropes, piton equipment and everything else the well equipped climbing party must have.

At six the next morning we were joined by another party of four Americans led by Fritz H. Weissner, well known climber and veteran of two Nanga-Parbak expeditions. (Nanga-Parbak is an Himalayan peak, stated

by mountaineering authorities to be the most difficult mountain in the world.) Weissner's party included Betty Woolsey, Olympic ski-er for U.S.A. and well known climber, Bill House and Alanson Wilcox, all from the Eastern States. They, too, were bent on conquering Mount Waddington, but it was agreed that as our party had laid its plans first we should make the first attempt.

Both parties left the same morning, each man packing a load of fifty to sixty-five pounds eight miles up the Franklin River. It was with a sigh of relief that we deposited the last of the load at the snout of Franklin Glacier six days later. Then we started all over again, and during the period between July 9th to the 13th transported the load another eight miles up the glacier to the confluence of Confederation and Jubilee glaciers.

On July 13th we were joined at Last Valley Camp by the seven other members of the party led by Bill Dobson, British Columbia Mountaineering Club, leader of the joint expedition. Dobson is a man who has had considerable experience throughout the Canadian Rockies. With him, Lawrence Grassi and Jim Irving, who also have considerable experience in Canadian mountains, made up the first rope. Elliot Henderson, second-rope climber, completed the Canadian personnel. Bestor Robinson led the Sierra group. He, with Dick Leonard and Jack Riegelhuth, had been members of last year's expedition. Raffie Bedayen, second-rope climber, completed the Sierra personnel. A reporter from a Vancouver newspaper was included in the party.

On July 14th we resumed action and moved camp some ten miles up Franklin Glacier and were rewarded by the first glimpse of our goal as we caught sight of Waddington through breaking clouds. Waddington was awe-inspiring; it towered far above the mole-hills we had thought were real mountains. About two thousand feet of the mountain, dusted with snow, reared suddenly out of clouds which covered all the surrounding peaks. It looked not unlike a mythical castle floating in the air with its three peaks amazingly like buttresses or towers.

It was a surprise and a joy to finish this day with neither sore feet nor aching joints, after having journeyed with heavy packs through winding crevasses about twelve miles. In fact it was the end of an absolutely perfect day.

DAY-BY-DAY ACCOUNT

July 15th: We were up well before dawn, had breakfast, and broke camp by 4 a.m. Our aim for the day was to get our complete load, including the cache left at Marvel Glacier, as far as Icefall Point, or at least to Saffron Creek. We made good time up the morrain of Saffron Creek, where we left our loads and returned to Marvel Glacier in time for a second lunch at 11.15 a.m.

We found an easier route up the centre of the glacier on our return trip, and made our way up to Icefall Point with very little trouble.

One sees and hears strange things when travelling on a glacier. We were amazed to see a waterspout, shooting five feet in the air, which looked like an ocean breaker. Later on we were sure we could hear the motor of a plane and sat down to search the sky for it. After several minutes of looking around we discovered that the noise was due to a subterranean stream. Another queer thing is the way travelling on a glacier affects one's sense of distance. You put your head down and plug along for a couple of hours and upon looking up appear to be in exactly the same spot.

We eventually arrived at Icefall Point at five o'clock. Icefall was an ideal spot for camping; situated about one hundred feet above the morrain of the Franklin Glacier it afforded a perfect view of the surrounding mountains. A small level meadow with a fair sized lake and plenty of water and firewood made it just about perfect.

After a short rest we returned to Saffron to pick up the load we left that morning, arriving back at Icefall at eight o'clock. We were all rather surprised at our own accomplishments as we had completed a very ambitious programme. We felt surprisingly fit after a fifteen-hour day of packing.

We were joined by the Weissner party, who were already in camp at Icefall Point and enjoyed an interesting chin-fest around a huge campfire. Spent a pleasant evening discussing past climbs and experiences, and so to bed.

July 16th: Up at 6 a.m. and spent a leisurely morning drying things and loafing. Weather was beautifully clear, but terribly hot. Left camp at 11.00 for Dias Glacier with forty pounds of grub and climbing supplies apiece. Unfortunately two Sierra men were laid up—one with an injured knee, the other with a slight stomach disorder.

Our route lay over the ridge behind the camp. Passed the cairn erected to Alex. Dalgleish, who lost his life on Waddington last year. When we dropped down to Upper Franklin, an altitude of seven thousand feet, the area was completely covered with snow. Notwithstanding this the heat was terrific. The sun temperature at the camp was 137 degrees. We reached the foot of Dias Icefall at 3.00 p.m. and left our cache there.

One could never imagine any mountain area at this altitude could be so vast. From Dias Glacier there is a complete circle of towering peaks, very little rock and not a tree nor a speck of moss to be seen. The closest of surrounding peaks was a good hard day's journey distant. To the north Fury Gap, the route of the Wilkinson Ski Expedition, seemed about the level of our cache (8000 feet).

On the return trip the heat got worse and worse, even though a haze covered the surrounding country. Anyone who has been under the sun when it reaches such a peak will realize just how hot it was, but the glacier has the effect of increasing the temperature of the sun's rays unbelievably, and by the time we reached the foot of the icefall another Sierra man was under the weather, and the rest of us were not feeling any too spry. I was surprised there were not more casualties. In spite of about four applications of different glacier creams and grease paint my face felt like a furnace.

July 17th: The party, with the exception of Austin, Henderson and myself, arose at 3.30 a.m. and left to establish high camp on Dias Glacier.

Henderson, who had rested up the previous day, went down to Marvel Glacier to pick up the one

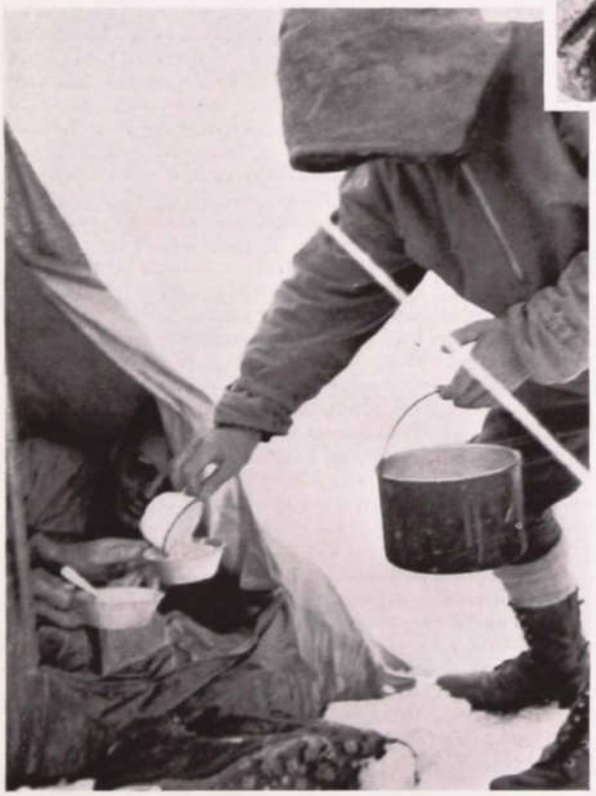
remaining load. Austin and I spent a leisurely day in camp. Though we did little else, we managed to lay plans for an ascent on Mount Vigilant the next day.

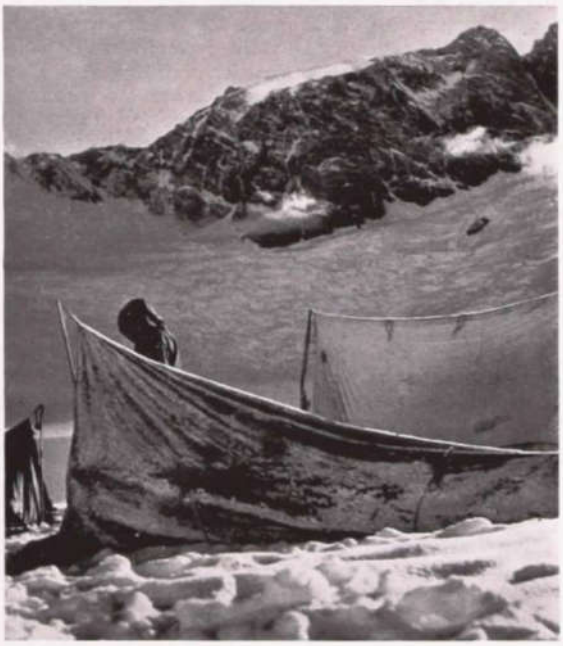
July 18th: Another stinging hot day, with mosquitoes by the thousands. The three of us were glad to get on the move when we left for Vigilant in the afternoon. Started out about two o'clock with supplies for three days.

Our route led us across the Franklin to the confluence with Dauntless Glacier. Our objective was to get as high as possible on the glacier before dark, from which point we would make our attempt on the peak tomorrow. The climb up the icefall proved quite eventful. We were almost caught by darkness while crossing treacherous crevasses; we managed, however, to make the base of a small scree slope just in the nick of time.

July 19th: At 4.00 a.m. we were up making ready for the climb. There was a terrific wind blowing and we were practically blown off the place before we managed to get away.

Right: Tiedman Glacier looking east from the north peak of Waddington. Below: "Soup's on"—grub service during the blizzard. Below, right: Sunrise at the Lower Dias camp after the three-days blizzard. Mount Waddington in the background.





We saved some time on route planning through snow-covered crevasses by following goat tracks. It is positively freakish the way these little animals can pick a perfect trail over snow-covered glaciers undermined with crevasses without coming to grief.

We had decided, after studying our route, to discard our snowshoes in favour of crampons, and, as often happens, discovered that while crampons were of no use whatsoever we would have saved a good hour on the ascent had we taken snowshoes. The snow was soft, and we were forced to kick steps on the steep slopes through three to four feet of powdered snow. We had practically to circle the peak in order to reach the base of the rock because of the tremendous bergshrund on the north side.

Had lunch at the first rock we had seen since 4.00 that morning and ascended to the peak via the south face. It proved a very interesting climb, being mostly on rock aided by a very conveniently placed snow couloir on the lower face. We reached the peak at 2.30 in the afternoon and enjoyed a marvellous panorama of peaks and glaciers. Vancouver Island and the Pacific Ocean stretched beyond, the inner channel, with its network of fjords, spreading right into the heart of the mountains. It was magnificent.

As there was only room for one man at a time on the main peak, we constructed our record cairn about ten feet below the summit and started the descent at 3.45. The snow couloir provided a thrilling glissade. (If only we could go up mountains as fast as we can come down.) Nevertheless we had our work cut out to reach camp before nightfall. However, by dog-trotting we managed to pick up our camp of the previous night and reached the edge of the Franklin Glacier, opposite Icefall Point, a few minutes after dark.

A small meadow at this point proved to be an even more pleasant camping spot than Icefall Point. There were two beautiful lakes and a constant breeze kept the mosquitoes down. The day had been hard going; the three of us were dog tired.

July 20th: Spent the day recuperating. Found the largest of the two lakes delightfully warm for a mountain lake at six thousand feet. We didn't get any farther than the top of our sleeping bags till after 1.00 o'clock though.

Some people will never learn that the sun is five times more effective in high altitudes. Had a very uncomfortable walk to Icefall Point and then used most of the oil and liniment in camp. The redskins had nothing on us! Deposited ourselves gingerly in sleeping bags, preparing to spend a very uncomfortable night.

July 21st: Oh my sunburn! Never realized there was so little shade at Icefall, or that the sun could be so hot. Had intended to pack up to Dias Glacier today, but somehow or other didn't feel like putting packs on.

Took turns reading to each other and called it a day.

July 22nd: Sunburn or no sunburn, we decided to move on. We had just finished packing when Irving and Adams blew in from the upper camp. Irving was nursing a bad knee, which eliminated him from further attempts on Waddington.

There had been three unsuccessful attempts by our party to date. The boys reported that Fritz Weissner and Bill House, after one day of reconnoitering, attempted the peak from upper Dias. As Irving and Adams left before Weissner's return, they did not know the result of this last attempt. The day before Bill Taylor, while exploring the upper Franklin, claimed to have seen a flash of light that might have been from an ice axe or goggles. The flash appeared to be about one hundred feet below the final summit, so we rather expected to hear that this last attempt had been successful.

The boys who had just returned informed us that the route above was in treacherous condition due to the hot weather. They advised us to put off our already delayed start till early the next morning in order to get over the bad part before the sun had softened the snow. We didn't need much persuading, and so another day was wasted.

July 23rd: We might have known the stretch of good weather couldn't last forever! Were disappointed to find, on awakening at 3.00 a.m., that it was raining hard. We got up finally at 7.00, and Austin, Adams, Irving and myself started out with the rations for high camp. When we reached the upper Franklin the rain was falling heavily. Irving returned to camp, but the rest of us continued as the supplies we were packing were badly needed above. The rain clouds were very low and we went on in hopes of climbing above them.

Arrived at Lower Dias camp. Found the others had returned from Upper Dias, excepting Dobson and Grassi, who had stayed on in hopes that the upper face of Waddington was above the storm.

We were not surprised to hear that Fritz Weissner's attempt had been successful. Fritz claimed that the climb was the most difficult rock and snow peak above ten thousand feet in the entire world to have been successfully climbed. His actual climbing time, starting at an altitude of ten thousand feet, was twenty-three hours with only a half-hour rest on the peak.

Weissner and House left their ice-cave camp at 2.30 on the morning of July 21st. Their route lay up the main snow couloir, which was made hazardous by falling rock. This part of the route was only feasible in the early hours of the morning before the sun had increased the avalanche danger. Above the couloir the route lay mostly on rock, quite loose and overhanging in spots. Fritz picked the route and to House lay the difficult job of handling the one hundred feet of rope, carrying two ice axes, the nailed climbing boots (after they had changed into rope-soled shoes for the rock work), piton equipment, food, camera and so on.

The last two hundred feet proved to be the most difficult, taking some four hours to negotiate. Pitons were used only to keep the rope clear of loose rock and not for actual support in climbing. The peak was reached at 3.20 in the afternoon. Waddington's famous snow feathers, which previous parties believed would provide a tremendous obstacle in the climb, were easily avoided, although on the lower slopes they proved a constant danger, as huge chunks would break off at intervals.

[*Continued on page 64*

THE COMPANY NEWS REEL

A group taken at the Company's Great Whale River post last spring. Left to right: Const. Yeomans, who had come for the mail from Port Harrison; R. Buchanan; F. Melton, who was being relieved as post manager by N. Ross, standing next to him, and Apprentice J. B. Tyrer, who was en route to the Belcher Islands.

Last year a cairn was erected at Wolstenholme post in Hudson Strait to record the fact that it was the first of a series of posts established in the Eastern Arctic during the years 1909 to 1928 under the direction of the present Fur Trade Commissioner. A. T. Swaffield, present post manager and builder of the cairn, stands by it.

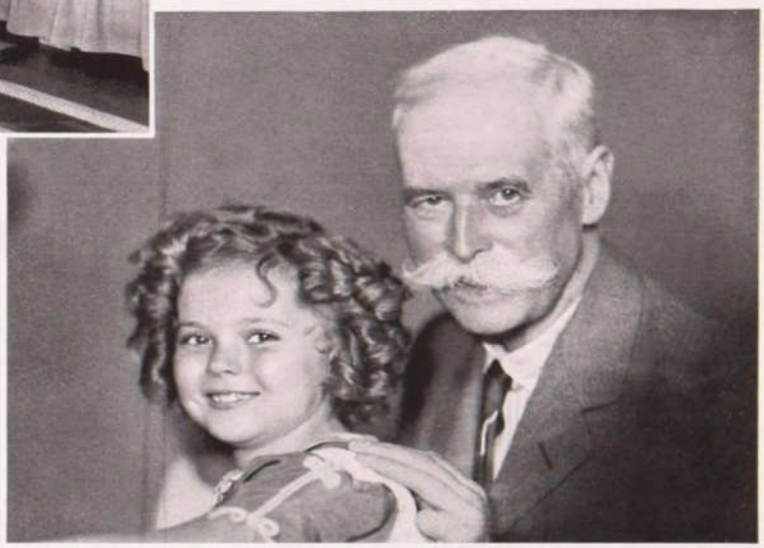
Left: Last spring the river ice came perilously close to the Moose Factory dwelling house.

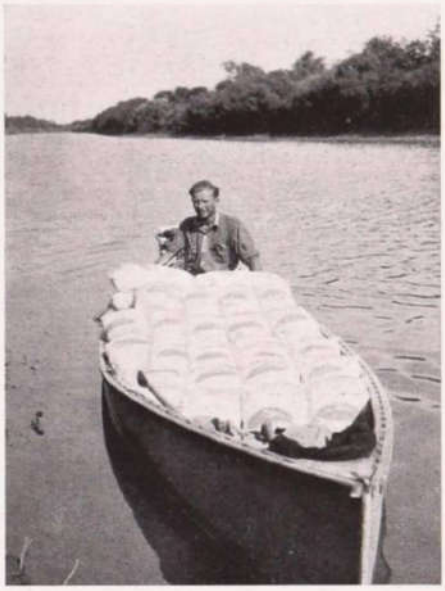
Below, left: A cold spell made the last trip of the "Distributor" a chilly affair. Here R. Wilson, of the Edmonton Fur Purchasing Agency, appears to be showing something of great interest to Miss Joyce Head, daughter of the Indian agent at Fort Good Hope, and Mrs. Butler, of the Aklavik Indian school, the two ladies being south bound passengers.

Above: Indian teepees near the Company post at Fort George on the east side of James Bay.

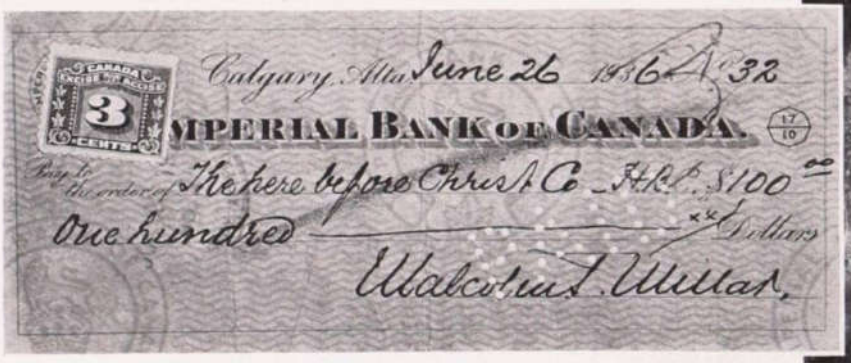
Left: As announced in the last issue of "The Beaver," the Company's retail stores have been displaying the world famous Titania's Palace, that exquisite fairy palace created by Sir Nevile Wilkinson. Many thousands have viewed the palace, and it is safe to say that all were more impressed than they expected to be. His Excellency the Governor-General was a visitor to Titania's Palace during his official visit to British Columbia.

Below: Here Sir Nevile is seen with the charming young Shirley Temple, who spent an hour and a half spellbound by the beauties of the palace during her visit to Vancouver. The palace will be in Winnipeg store in March and April, and in Saskatoon a few weeks later.





Left: R. A. Hutton, in an eighteen-foot canoe with a ton of flour en route to Pas Mountain post. Below: J. H. Bennett, senior salesman of the Company's Vancouver wholesale, perches a couple of samples on the signboard marking the highest spot on the British Columbia roads. There are few places in mountainous British Columb a where these salesmen do not penetrate.



Above: The above cheque, drawn as a bet, cost the payer $100, much, we understand, to his surprise. He did not believe the bank would recognize "The Here Before Christ Co." as the Hudson's Bay Company.

Above: These are not imitation vegetables stolen from a railroad company display window, but an assortment from the small garden of Sturgeon Lake post in Northern Alberta. We understand that P. P. Foreman, the post manager, and his wife are standing behind the third pumpkin.

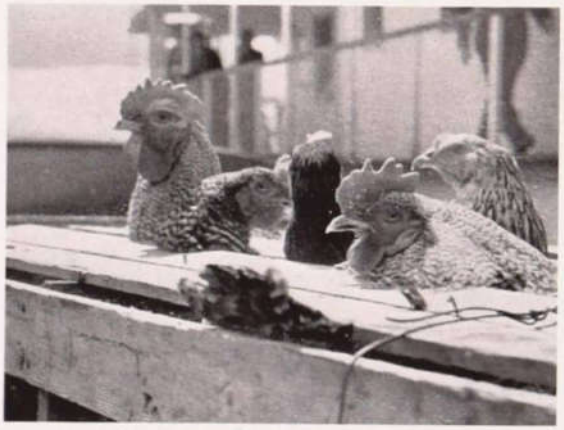
Right: Capt. D. Naylor, of the Company's S.S. "Distributor," one of the best known and most popular men on the Mackenzie.

Above, left: The Anglican Bishop of the Arctic, with Rev. H. S. Shepherd, chatting outside the Shingle Point church with Rev. Thomas Omak, an Eskimo deacon.

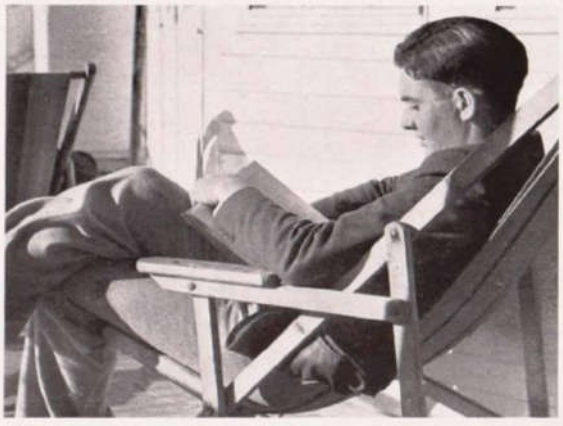
Above, right: Herschel island, off the Yukon coast, has 370 varieties of wild flowers, though the island is only a silt deposit on a foundation of glacial age ice. Mrs. L. Washburn, of Hanover, New Hampshire, who was a visitor in the Western Arctic last summer, is here photographed as she gathered flowers for the dining room table of the Company post on the island.

Left: C. W. Veysey, manager of the Company's wine and spirit department, and his assistant manager, A. Brock (numbers 2 and 4 in the front row), last summer entertained in Winnipeg a number of agents and purveyors of Good Spirits from Boston.

Sergeant J. V. Eddy, R.C.M.P., who this summer took command of the police boat "St. Roch" which patrols the Arctic coast east of the mouth of the Mackenzie.



"The North teems with animal life," and here are a few more sent last summer to swell the numbers.



Tom Scurfield, H.B.C. fur trader from Aklavik post, takes it easily on his way up the river to his new appointment at Fort Chipewyan.

Above: R. H. G. Bonnycastle, who has recently handed over the charge of his Western Arctic district before assuming another charge in the Company, photographed in business-like clothes with Inspector Curleigh at Tuktoyaktuk depot.

Below: Conference on the Mackenzie. Fred Camsell, a trapper, the purser and the captain talk things over while the "Distributor" takes on cordwood for her ever hungry fires.

Above, left: The "Port Simpson," built for the Company in 1908 and which operated until the railway came through in 1912. The wreck of the hull now lies near Prince Rupert.

Above, right: The "Hazelton," built by a competitor of the Company in 1900. The Company bought the vessel in 1903 and operated it until 1911.

Left: The Hudson's Bay Company post at Port Simpson at the beginning of this century. It was at Port Simpson that the river boats were hauled out each winter.

River Boats on the Skeena

By
MRS. C. G. STEVENS

Before the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway reached the Pacific Coast at Prince Rupert in 1912 the Hudson's Bay Company stern wheelers worked up the turbulent Skeena to Hazelton

A VERY interesting reminder of the early life of the Hudson's Bay Company lies in Prince Rupert Harbour, British Columbia. This is the remains of the river boat, *Hazelton*, a stern-wheel steamer. This old boat could tell many interesting and romantic stories of the early adventures and struggles to maintain an existence along the Skeena river. The hull of the old *Port Simpson*, sister ship to the *Hazelton*, also lies near Prince Rupert, on Digby island.

In the early days the Hudson's Bay Company found it very difficult and expensive to supply their interior posts from Port Simpson, which at that time was the headquarters and main distributing point for New Caledonia, as the northern district of British Columbia was then called. All goods had to be taken in by canoe up the Skeena river and all raw furs brought out the same way. This not only was a very dangerous means of transportation, owing to the treacherous river and the hostile Indians encountered along the way, but was expensive and wasted a great deal of time. About the year 1889, on the recommendation of Mr. John Flewin, who was then government agent of the district, Mr. R. H. Hall, chief factor of Port Simpson trading post, decided to investigate the possibilities of running a stern-wheel steamer on the Skeena river as a means of lessening this expense as well as the hazards of distributing supplies to the interior.

As a result Captain George Oden, of New Westminster, a well known river steamboat man, thoroughly investigated the possibilities of negotiating the treacherous Kitsalas canyon on the Skeena river. Under his instructions the first Hudson's Bay Company stern-wheel river steamer was built in New Westminster in 1890. This boat was about one hundred feet in length and was called the *Caledonia*. Captain Oden successfully negotiated the Skeena river to Hazelton with her in 1891, and then carried on a successful trade up and down the river till the spring of 1898, when the boat was towed back to Victoria and her engines transferred to the new *Caledonia*, a larger vessel.

This new steamer plied on the Skeena river for a number of years and also made one trip a year up the Stikine river. Captain Oden was succeeded by Captain Bonser, a capable, well known river man.

At the time of the Yukon gold rush, and also because fish canneries were opening along the northwestern coast, the Hudson's Bay Company found they had to have more boats to handle the rush of business on the rivers; so the steamer *Strathcona* was built in Victoria and ran in 1900. This boat travelled in conjunction with the *Caledonia* until 1902, when the *Mount Royal*, a much larger and more beautiful vessel, joined them. This latter boat was also built in Victoria by Mr. Alex Watson, one of the finest ship builders known.

At this time it was only natural that other companies should see the advantages of the river trading, and the steamer *Hazelton* was one of the first boats to be built in Victoria (in 1900). It was built for Mr. George Cunningham, of Port Essington, and operated by him on the Skeena river. Later it was sold to the Hudson's Bay Company about 1903. The *Hazelton* then ran with the *Mount Royal*, and the two smaller boats were laid off. The *Mount Royal* was unfortunate in bridging the canyon at Kitsalas in July 1907. It turned over and drowned several of the crew, including the purser. The old *Caledonia* was brought into service again for the rest of that year and then the large new steamer *Port Simpson* took the place of *Mount Royal* in 1908. This boat was also built in Victoria by Mr. Watson.

There was constant rivalry among all the different captains and companies on the river as to who could make the best trips. Great difficulties had to be overcome all the way. The Skeena river was very treacherous at any time, and with the continually shifting sand bars, difficult turns, narrow canyons and rushing waters, the captains and their crews had to be on their toes always. In spite of these difficulties, one boat would try to outwit another, usually playing tricks on each other—anything to delay the other captain's schedule—as for instance: picking up extra supplies of wood along the way so that the ship behind would not be able to get her fuel. These events all added to the excitement and pleasure of the passengers on board the steamers, and as the same captain was seldom on the same boat two years in succession it made it all the more interesting as the captains were so well known by everyone travelling on the river. Even among the Hudson's Bay Company's own captains there was great rivalry, especially between Captain Johnson of the *Mount Royal* and Captain Bonser of the *Hazelton*. They even went so far one time as to stage a small naval battle and fired shots at each other, but no damage was done. They also tried to ram their boats once in the middle of the river. Their rivalry ran beyond a joke several times, but it certainly held the interest of their passengers. The captains on the various steamers were also always trying to see who could make the fastest trip up the river to Hazelton and back. Captain Johnson made one trip in fifty-six hours with the *Mount Royal*, and then Captain Gardner made it in forty-seven hours with the *Hazelton* a little later the same season.

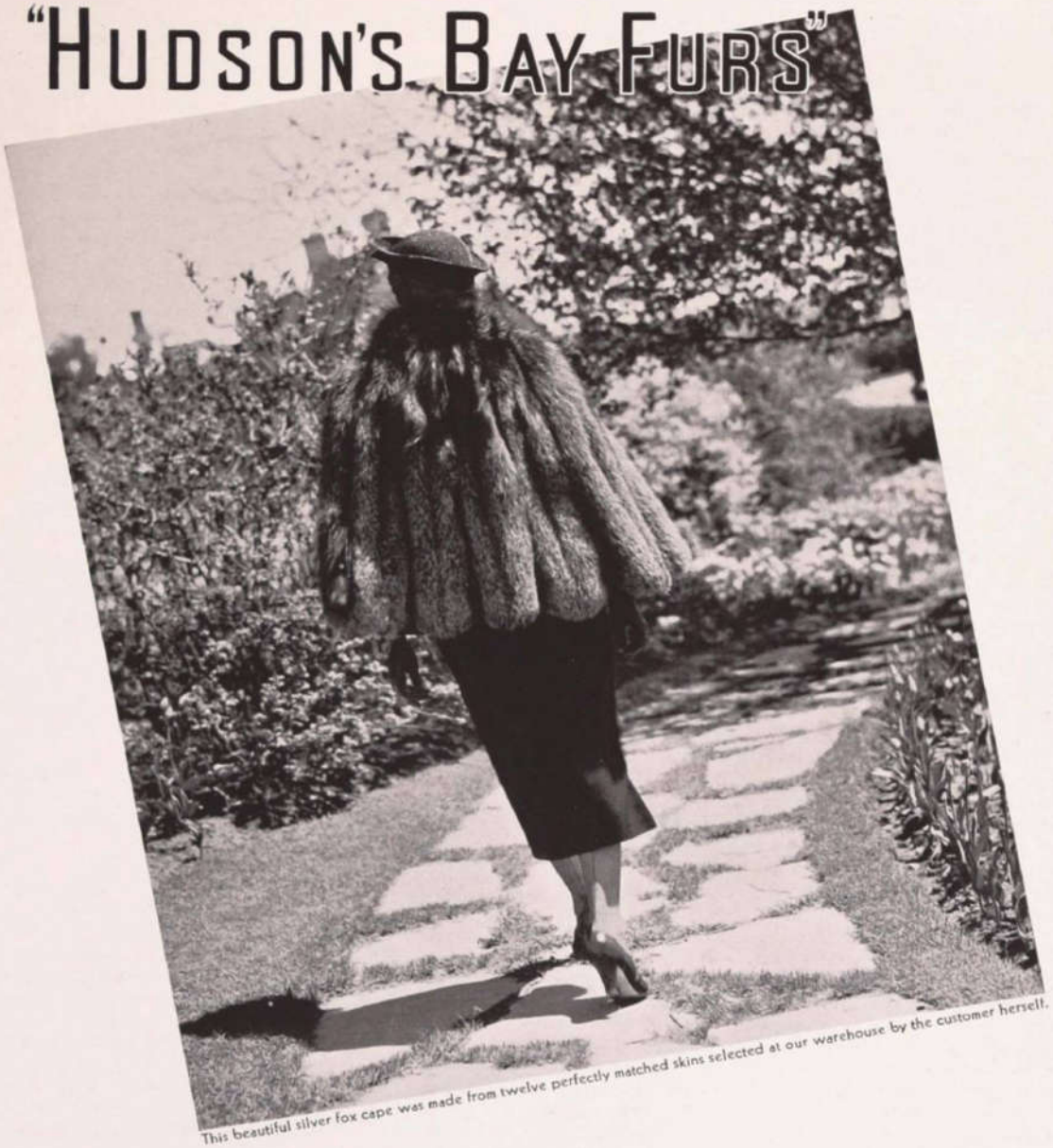
The Kitsalas canyon was the greatest difficulty along the Skeena river, and after the loss of the *Mount Royal*, during the season when waters were particularly high, the Hudson's Bay Company would usually keep one of their steamers above the canyon and the other below and portage all freight across from one vessel to the other. They usually kept the *Hazelton* on the upper part of the river, as it was the smaller boat and more easily handled. The waters of the Skeena would rise very quickly and at Hazelton it was often known to rise seventeen feet at the wharf in one day. Right in the Kitsalas canyon there was a rise of sixty feet in the high water season, so it can be readily understood the captains of these river boats had no easy tasks.

In the early days the Hudson's Bay Company river boats made their regular trips from Port Simpson up the Skeena whenever enough freight and passengers warranted them doing so. However, as there was a great deal of rough water between Port Essington and Port Simpson, the boats soon made their headquarters at Port Essington and travelled regularly between there and Hazelton, generally about once a week. Their first trips of the year were always very exciting and usually made about the beginning of May. Any other trips earlier in the season had to be made by canoe. It was a great thrill to the people of the interior to get their first supply of fresh fruit, mail, etc., after being shut in all winter. The last trip of the season was generally made about the end of October, so it was naturally a time of great rejoicing when the first boat of the next spring arrived. At the end of the season, with the exception of the *Mount Royal*, which returned to Victoria every fall, the boats all went back to Port Simpson, where they were pulled ashore till the next spring.

The *Hazelton* and the *Port Simpson* were the only two Hudson's Bay Company steamers that ran on the rivers after 1908. They both carried sixty to eighty cabin passengers and from sixty to one hundred tons of freight, the *Port Simpson* being considerably the larger boat. It would usually take them about three or four days to go up the Skeena to Hazelton and about one or two to come back. In addition to their regular journeys up and down the Skeena, these steamers made at least two trips up the Stikine river as well as numerous side trips to different canneries. In 1908 they also began excursion trips to Prince Rupert and sometimes around Kaien island.

The steamer *Hazelton* was engaged in river trading until about 1911, and the *Port Simpson* for a year longer, till the completion of the Grand Trunk railway in 1912. After lying idle at Port Simpson, the hull of the *Port Simpson* was finally sold to Mr. M. M. Stephens, of Prince Rupert, about 1915, and now it lies as a wreck near the city. We understand the engines of these two boats were taken by the Hudson's Bay Company and installed in transport boats built for the Mackenzie river. The hull of the *Hazelton* was sold to the Prince Rupert Yacht Club in 1912 and used for a club house for years till it was finally abandoned in 1924. Thus we find it lying in the Prince Rupert harbour, a vivid reminder of the interesting and romantic bygone days along the Northern British Columbia coast.

"HUDSON'S BAY FURS"



This beautiful silver fox cape was made from twelve perfectly matched skins selected at our warehouse by the customer herself.

There is not a finer guarantee of quality!

The Hudson's Bay Company has been setting fur standards for the world for two-and-a-half-centuries. "Hudson's Bay No. 1" means "Perfect specimen" to trade buyers. Visit our Montreal warehouse and with the aid of our expert graders select your furs from "Hudson's Bay No. 1's." Buy with the assurance your furs are perfect; that each skin is genuine; because you buy direct from the trading company they will cost you less.

HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY — FUR TRADE DEPARTMENT — 100 McGILL STREET, MONTREAL

602 Stradbrooke Avenue before the miracle—unwanted, down-at-heel, "ornamented."

A few weeks later; 602 Stradbrooke Avenue looking the world in the face, and as smart inside as out.

Photographs by H B C Retail Store, Winnipeg, Photo Studio

Set Thine House in Order

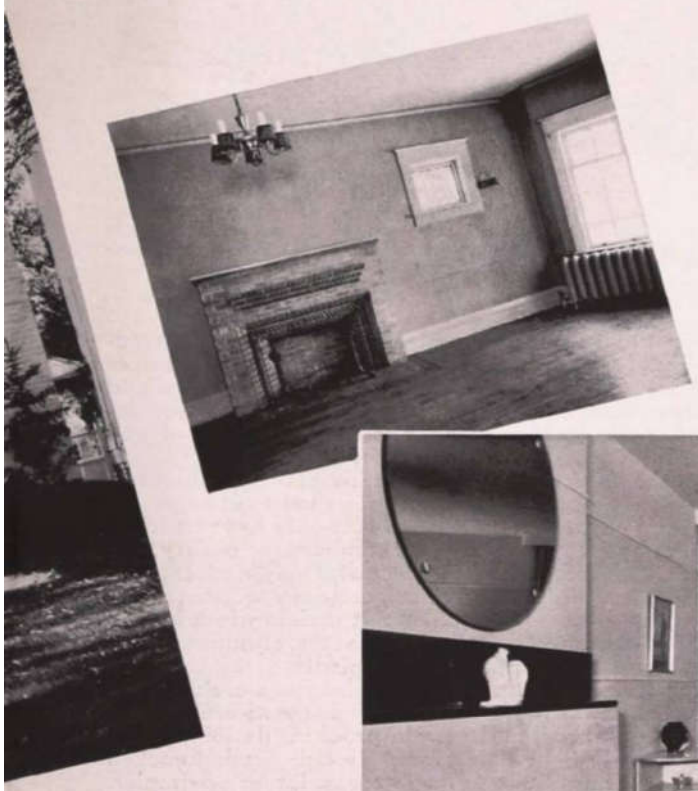
The Company's retail store in Winnipeg, without the aid of a magician's wand, changed two old-fashioned thread-bare houses into attractive modern homes, and furnished each with individual and distinctive charm.

By
AVIS C. GRAY
Winnipeg Store

THE Dominion Government recently put into effect its long awaited Rehabilitation Plan—a scheme whereby money at low interest rates is available to property owners for building, remodelling, repairing or installing permanent household fixtures. Simultaneously the Hudson's Bay Company opened two modernized houses in Winnipeg.

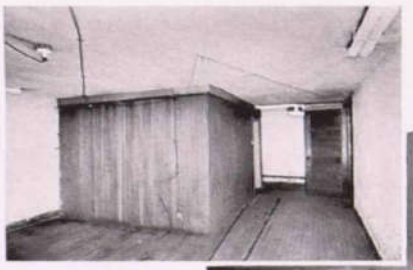
All through Canada there are thousands of old homes with good solid foundations that have, to all external appearances, gone to rack and ruin. The Company's Retail Store in Winnipeg bought two such houses—both basically sound, both down-at-heel and unwanted—one, 123 Luxton Avenue, a house for the average family; the other, a larger house for people of greater income, 602 Stradbrooke Avenue.

Now—completely remodelled, redecorated and furnished in the modern trend—they are open to public view, and during the first two weeks over fifteen thousand people inspected them.

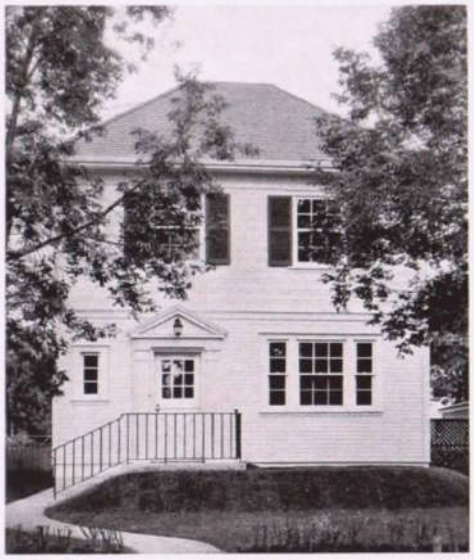


The old living room—dark, cheerless, cold.

The modern room, after the Winnipeg Store had "called it a day."



Top, left: The cob-web buried, dingy basement at 602 Stradbrooke Avenue now contains, above, an attractive recreation room. Centre, left: 123 Luxton Avenue—sound construction, but ugly and untenanted. Lower, left: The same house after its beauty treatment.



When the Store first looked into them, both the Luxton and Stradbrooke houses were badly delapidated—doors sagged, window frames were shrunken and draughty, ceilings were cracked, floors warped and squeaky, stairs narrow and difficult, cupboards dark, dingy and inconveniently placed, roofs leaked, verandahs were big, unused and kept the light from the front downstairs rooms. Twenty years ago they had the charm and freshness of youth. A few weeks ago they were dejected and resigned to old age. Today they are entirely rejuvenated! Not only have their exterior faces been lifted to modern standards of beauty, but their interiors have undergone successful major operations!

Into each house the Store sent a crew of specialists, who ripped off ugly verandahs, pulled out useless windows and built new ones located to better advantage, eliminated outside ornaments and supplanted them with gracious fronts of modern simplicity. Dried up old shingles were replaced with staunch cedar roofing, and both houses were well insulated with fireproof and vermin-proof insulation.

Within, whole floor plans were altered—walls knocked down and new ones built to make rooms larger or simpler. Dangerous open wiring was entirely eliminated and complete new systems, safe and convenient, installed. Plumbing was shifted and added to and new fixtures of modern beauty and utility put in. Floors were scraped, filled, polished and in some instances relaid. Pokey cupboards disappeared and well lit ones of sensible proportions took their place.

Originally the cellar in each house was an undivided area the entire size of the building, dreary and dark, a maze of pipes, coal bins, furnace, laundry equipment and accumulated junk. By judicious planning and rearrangement, this confusion has been regulated to [*Continued on page 64*

LONDON OFFICE NEWS

Several members of the London staff have recently been on the move. Mr. Norman Beynes, the assistant manager of the Fur Department, is at present in Southwest Africa establishing our organization for soliciting consignments of Persian lamb skins. Mr. Frank Heyes, the department's technical superintendent, is just off to Scandinavia, where he is to tour a number of silver fox farms and consult with our agents and many consignors.

Mr. Jack Maurice, the manager of the fish and liquor departments, has recently returned from a tour which has taken him to St. John's (Newfoundland), Winnipeg, New York and other towns in the States, discussing the sale of Job Brothers & Company's products.

Since our last letter we have had the pleasure of visits from Mr. N. B. Francis, controller of the Canadian Committee office; Mr. J. C. Atkins, insurance manager in the Canadian Committee office; and Mr. H. P. Warne, who is in charge of the fur purchasing agencies in Canada. Mr. Warne came over to attend the autumn fur sale.

The archives department has again been busy and, in addition to Mr. Francis and Mr. Atkins, they have received visits from a number of students of Canadian history. Professor Arthur S. Morton, of the University of Saskatchewan, was with us until early in September, when he returned to Canada; Dr. Burt Brown Barker, vice-president, and Professor R. C. Clark, head of the department of history of the University of Oregon, have completed their research for material in connection with the history of Oregon and have returned to the United States; Professor W. T. Morgan, of the department of history in the Indiana University, has been obtaining information relative to the importance of the Hudson Bay area in the negotiation of the treaties of Ryswick and Utrecht and its bearing on the colonial aspects of Anglo-French diplomacy between 1689 and 1720.

From the Continent, Professor Marcel Giraud, of the Lycee of Rheims, resumed his studies concerning the history of the half-breeds in the western provinces of Canada.

Commander C. H. Williams, from the meteorological office of the Air Ministry, has been seeking information about the various ships belonging to the Company which have borne the name of *Discovery*.

THE FUR TRADE

Fur Trade Commissioner's Office

The Fur Trade Commissioner returned from his trip to the Mackenzie River and the Western Arctic districts at the end of August. This trip included all the posts on the Mackenzie river and Aklavik, Herschel Island, Tuktoyaktuk, Bernard Harbour and Fort Hearne in the Western Arctic. The trip from Waterways to Fort Norman was made by power-boat and from Fort Norman the balance of the trip and the return to Edmonton was made by plane. The Fur Trade Commissioner was accompanied by M. R. Lubbock, and Bishop Fleming joined the plane in the Western Arctic and returned by it to Edmonton.

The Commissioner spent the early part of October in the east, visiting Montreal, North Bay and Toronto, and at the time of writing, he is visiting the main centres in the west, including Regina, Saskatoon, Prince A bert, Edmonton, Calgary, Port Simpson, Vancouver and Seattle.

H. P. Warne returned from leave at the end of August and left soon afterwards for London, where he attended the autumn sale. He returned to Winnipeg early in November and is at present visiting the western agencies.

A. M. Jones returned to Seattle at the beginning of September and has again taken over the agency there.

M. R. Lubbock and J. C. Donald are at present visiting various fur-farming centres in eastern Canada and will probably attend some of the fur shows.

H. E. Cooper visited posts in the Mackenzie-Athabasca district during the late summer and more recently he has visited some of the North Shore posts in the St. Lawrence district and also Red Lake and other posts in the Superior-Huron district *en route*.

Among recent visitors in Winnipeg we have noted the following: Dr. Law, of the Canadian National Railways; Bishop Geddes of the Yukon, who visited eastern Canada; Bishop Turquetil, who made the trip on the *Nascopie* from Chesterfield to Pond's Inlet and back to Halifax; J. Cadham, general manager of the ammunition division of Canadian Industries Limited, who has only recently returned from an extended trip to the Old Country; Mr. Dalgleish, of the Dalgleish Shipping Company, who was returning from Churchill; C. Landau, of Landau & Cormack, Montreal, and Harvey Weber, of The Pas. J. J. G. Rosser, of Prince Albert, also visited us recently and seemed to greatly enjoy renewing old acquaintances.

On leaving to be married, Miss Paul was presented by the staff with a case of flatware. The wedding took place at Ottawa October 28, and we wish Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Treble the best of luck. Miss Ross, of Superior-Huron district, has now taken over Miss Paul's duties in the F.T.C.O.

The *Nascopie* returned to Halifax, October 1, one day ahead of schedule, after an exceptionally good trip. Very little ice was met and there was very little delay through bad weather. Craig Harbour was the farthest north port of call. Dundas Harbour was closed down and Arctic Bay re-opened. The ship is wintering at Halifax and Chief Officer Stephen, Chief Engineer Thomas and Chief Stewart Reed are working by her. We understand Mr. Reed is contemplating visiting his family in the Old Country this winter and having a well-earned holiday.

Captain Smellie returned to Winnipeg during the latter part of October, after having completed all arrangements for the wintering of the *Nascopie*.

W. C. Nelson resigned at the end of September to return to England. Before leaving, he was presented by the staff with a tray as a souvenir of his connection with the Fur Trade. We wish Mr. and Mrs. Nelson every success in their new sphere. R. Murray has been transferred from Edmonton to the Fur Trade Commissioner's office to take over Mr. Nelson's duties.

Rapid progress is being made in the construction of a model store and fur grading instruction room on the first floor of Hudson Bay House. When completed, it is hoped that these will be of valuable assistance in the training of the posts' staffs and others in the duties appertaining to store management and fur buying.

British Columbia District

J. Milne returned to district office on 3rd October after completing an inspection of the district, having been away from the office from 22nd May. Among the posts visited were McLeod's Lake, Fort Grahame, Whitewater, Telegraph Creek, Dease Lake, McDames Creek, Liard, Port Simpson, Fort St. James, Tacla, Babine and Old Fort. A visit was also paid to Vancouver in July.

Other than the floods encountered in the Findlay river country, Mr. Milne found general conditions throughout the district very fair.

The boats on the British Columbia and Alaska coast enjoyed a very busy season; the number of tourists travelling was the highest in years, passenger accommodation being taxed to the utmost.

The 1936 fishing season at our Port Simpson post was a very good one.

Geo. P. McColl, former manager of Port Simpson post, retired from the service on 31st August. Both Mr. and Mrs. McColl were in rather poor health and are now holidaying in the States and plan an extended trip to Scotland via the Orient during the winter.

Our best wishes and congratulations are extended to Mr. and Mrs. A. D. Mackintosh, who were married in Vanderhoof on 13th October 1936. Mrs. Mackintosh was the former Miss Carrol, of Vancouver, B. C. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Basil Procter, Anglican minister, and L. S. Murphy, of our Fort St. James post, acted as best man. The newly married couple left by plane on the 15th for Tacla post, where Mr. Mackintosh is in charge.

An air mail contract has been awarded to Mr. Grant McConachie, of United Air Transport, for service into the Findlay river country, with our Fort Grahame post at the end of the run. The service commences in January and will consist of eight trips per year.

The British Columbia Government Telegraphs have erected a wireless station at Findlay Forks, which fills a much needed want in that sector.

Considerable renewed interest has been shown in the mining industry in certain

parts of the province where we are located, particularly at Manson Creek, Tacla vicinity and the Cassiar sector. Results of this mining activity show up in the increased amount of gold dust being shipped out by our posts.

All freighting to inland posts has been completed for the season, and with the exception of the Frances Lake supplies, which failed to get in, operations were quite successful. Due to extremely high water in the Findlay river in the early part of the season, supplies for Whitewater post were delayed, but eventually got through in good shape. We are flying in a small outfit to Frances Lake from Carcross, Y.T., by Northern Airways Limited, the original supplies having been left at Liard post.

Our new warehouse at Summit Lake has been successfully completed. Mr. A. P. Anderson, of Prince George, was the contractor.

During the summer a number of staff changes have been made. W. H. Houston, formerly of McLeod's Lake, is now in charge of Port Simpson post. We welcome W. T. Winchester, of Mackenzie-Athabasca district, who is now assistant at Port Simpson. W. G. Crisp was transferred from Kitwanga to the charge of McLeod's Lake post. J. S. Nelson is now in charge of Kitwanga post, having been transferred from Babine.

We welcome J. W. Forrest, formerly with Revillon Freres, to the district. Mr. Forrest has been placed in charge of Babine post, where we wish him every success.

A. D. Mackintosh has been transferred from Liard to Tacla post as manager.

W. M. Mills was transferred from Kitwanga to Fort St. James, as apprentice.

W. H. T. Tipton, of Telegraph Creek post, took his family to England in October, where we hope he is enjoying a well earned vacation.

We welcome James Allan to the district. Mr. Allan was engaged in Victoria, B.C., and is now apprentice clerk at Kitwanga.

R. W. Murray was transferred from Edmonton district office to Winnipeg in October. We were all sorry to lose Mr. Murray, but wish him every success in his new appointment. H. L. Woolison, formerly with Mackenzie River Transport, succeeds Mr. Murray as accountant.

We regret to report the death, last August, of Mr. John Jorgensen of Summit Lake, B.C. The freighting of our supplies for posts in the Findlay river sector was in charge of Mr. Jorgensen.

We are informed that Geo. Beirnes' ranch at Hazelton has been purchased by Mr. Prosser and is to be used as a landing field for aeroplanes. A beacon is to be installed, as well as a filling station.

After having been operated for several years, the government fish hatchery near Old Fort on Babine lake was closed during the past summer.

The following members of our staff from inland posts paid a short visit to the outside: Mr. and Mrs. J. Gregg, of Telegraph Creek; A.D. Mackintosh from Liard; James Ware from Whitewater; and Mr. and Mrs. L. T. Kempple from Fort Grahame.

The Fur Trade Commissioner paid a visit to district office on returning from his Western Arctic and Mackenzie River district inspection trip.

The district office staff take this opportunity of extending to the staff and friends at the various posts a very merry Christmas and a happy and successful New Year.

Western Arctic District

The Fur Trade Commissioner and Mr. M. R. Lubbock made an inspection flight to Aklavik, Herschel Island, Tuktuk, Bernard Harbour and Fort Hearne in August.

Due to exceptionally heavy ice in the Western Arctic during the past summer, great difficulty was experienced in making delivery of supplies to the posts. At the commencement of the season the M.S. *Margaret A* was reconditioned and strengthened and pressed into service, but due to heavy ice did not get any farther east than Inman River and here transferred her cargo to the R.C.M.P. *St. Roch*, which met her from the east and turned about after the trans-shipment of cargoes. Upon the return of the *Margaret A* at Tuktuk the *Fort James* was pressed into commission and Captain R. J. Summers and crew transferred from the *Margaret A* to the *Fort James* and again headed east. The *Fort James* is now frozen in at Reid Island and Captain Summers, Chief Engineer White and William Starkes will stand by the vessel all winter.

The *Audrey B* was also chartered from Watson & Purcell and made one voyage from Tuktuk to Cambridge Bay and return to Coppermine.

Ralph Jardine, formerly of Bathurst Inlet, passed through Winnipeg on August 5 on his way to Cornerbrook, Newfoundland, where his mother was seriously ill.

A. Copland, district manager, after being stranded at Baillie Island over freeze-up, arrived at Aklavik in November after travelling overland. R. H. G. Bonnycastle was also marooned at Coppermine over the "in between" season, but it is expected he will arrive in Winnipeg presently, accompanied by Messrs. Claydon and Stevens, second engineer and chef of the *Fort James* respectively.

C. V. Rowan, formerly post manager at Fort Collinson, is now on furlough in Vancouver after five years in the Arctic.

Thomas Scurfield has been transferred to Mackenzie-Athabasca district.

E. H. Riddell, formerly at Letty Harbour, will be in charge of Herschel Island during the winter months.

W. P. Johnston spent some time in charge of Herschel this summer, while Thomas Scurfield relieved him at Aklavik.

Constable D. E. Parkes, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, until recently stationed at Coppermine, was a visitor to district office on November 16 on his way to the United Kingdom on furlough.

N. A. Wilding and F. E. Mehmel returned to Winnipeg early in October after conducting the business at Tuktuk post and the activities of Western Arctic Transport during the season. George W. McLeod is in charge at Tuktuk until spring.

Right Reverend A. L. Fleming, Bishop of the Arctic, visited Aklavik, Shingle Point, Tuktuk, Herschel Island and Coppermine, travelling altogether 9,479 miles, 4,579 miles of which were by air.

Mackenzie-Athabasca District

The district manager returned to Edmonton on 9th September after spending the summer months inspecting posts in the Mackenzie River section, as well as Great Bear Lake, Great Slave Lake, Lake Athabasca and Portage la Loche sections.

We welcome two new apprentices, viz., Jack K. Kerr to Fort Dease in September and Paul G. Williamson to Portage la Loche in October.

Apprentice T. W. Fraser was transferred from Fort Dease to McMurray in September.

We extend congratulations to Fred McLeod, of Fort Providence post, who was married to Miss Rose Lafferty at Fort Providence in May last, and also to George E. Duncan, who was married to Miss Alice Cardinal at Fort McPherson on 2nd September.

During the summer the Fur Trade Commissioner, accompanied by Mr. M. R. Lubbock, visited all the posts down the Mackenzie river, as well as several in the Western Arctic district and posts on Lake Athabasca.

H. E. Cooper, of the Fur Trade Commissioner's office, visited Fort McMurray, Fort Chipewyan, Fort Fitzgerald, Fort Smith and Goldfields posts during the summer.

C. H. J. Winter, of the Fur Trade Commissioner's office, late of the Mackenzie-Athabasca district office, is at present at Fort Nelson inspecting and temporarily in charge.

T. Clarke, late of Fort Nelson post, underwent an operation in October, when he had one of his eyes taken out.

Frank Seguin, late of Fort St. John post, retired on pension in October. Mr. Seguin had a very varied experience, having been in charge of many posts in Saskatchewan, Superior-Huron and Mackenzie-Athabasca districts. Mr. Seguin is spending his retirement farming in the Fairydell district southwest of Edmonton.

It is with the deepest regret that we announce the death at Edmonton on September 13 of Henry Larocque, who was accidentally killed at a railway crossing. The deceased was a son of the late Louis Larocque and was well known around Fort Smith, N.W.T., and served as a cook on Western Arctic district boats.

S. D. Fraser, assistant at Fort Providence post, retired from the service in September and returned to Scotland.

W. T. Winchester, assistant at Fort McMurray post, was transferred to Port Simpson post in British Columbia district in September.

A new store has been built at Hudson's Hope and at the time of writing is practically completed.

Apprentice J. M. Ross was transferred from Fort Resolution to Arctic Red River post in September, and I. R. Eklund was transferred from Arctic Red River post to Fort McPherson also in September.

W. C. Rothnie, of Fort McMurray post, recently spent about six weeks in Winnipeg undergoing a training in merchandising.

J. H. Sime, of Fort Liard post, retired from the service in October.

Although retiring on pension after thirty-six years' service, A. F. Camsell, late of Fort Norman post, has decided not to relinquish fur trading and has taken charge of Fort McKay post for at least a year.

Louis Roy, of Snowdrift post, left on furlough in October and W. G. MacKinnon, accompanied by Mrs. MacKinnon, took over the charge of Snowdrift post in August.

Extensive additions have been made to our Goldfields post, where the activity during the summer months was great. Mr. Butchart, post manager, also looks forward to a great winter.

Andrew Reid, of Fort Dease post, Great Bear Lake, is not at all upset through the activity at Goldfields, and claims he is still quite optimistic in regard to his section.

H. G. Evans, who has just returned from furlough and was formerly at Bersimis post, is proceeding to Fort Nelson post as soon as winter travelling conditions permit. T. Scurfield was transferred from Aklavik to Fort Chipewyan post in September.

Mr. George W. Allan, the Chairman of the Canadian Committee, and Mr. P. A. Chester, General Manager, were visitors to Edmonton for several days at the end of October.

Mackenzie River Transport

Low water in the Clearwater and Athabasca rivers during the latter part of the season did much to retard the movement of freight, which arrived each week in increasing quantities, the shallows immediately below Fort McMurray being responsible for damage to barges but without loss of goods carried.

The unusual rush of freight at the end of the season, and storms, involved risk of some of the boats being frozen in. The *Dease Lake* and *Hearne Lake* arrived at Fort Smith from Great Slave Lake in the middle of October, necessitating the crews being flown out, whilst the *Pelly Lake*, *Canadusa* and the chartered tug *Saskalta Queen* arrived at Tar Island shipyard, eighteen miles below Fort McMurray, with three hours to spare before the ice closed in. Their crews walked the remaining distance to Waterways.

The S.S. *Distributor* arrived at Fort Smith at the completion of her final trip September 26 and was soon hauled out in winter quarters at Gravel Point shipyard.

The S.S. *Athabasca River* completed her final trip October 18.

Owing to engine trouble on *Canadusa* we were unfortunate in being unable to effect delivery of some groceries for Goldfields beyond the mouth of the river. Ice on the lake prevented the boat from getting across after repairs had been effected.

S.S. *Northland Echo* underwent extensive repairs in order to recondition her as an emergency unit.

M.S. *Hearne Lake* and barge No. 150 were successfully brought down Bear river without damage and arrived at Fort Norman September 2. The hazardous trip through Bear River rapids occupied seventeen days, the vessels having to be pulled over the shallows by a steam donkey engine taken up for the purpose.

Navigation on Peace river was brought to a close by the arrival of M.B. *Weenusk* at Peace River town on October 15.

The heavy inflow of traffic at Waterways necessitated two, and at times three, trains a week from Edmonton, including the regular weekly train.

John Sutherland, engineer, who retired on pension December 31, 1935, wishes to thank those members of the Fur Trade staff and Transport who subscribed towards the easy chair and smoking cabinet presented to him in appreciation of his long service with the Company. Mr. Sutherland, although retired, was again back in harness during the past summer, acting as second engineer on the S.S. *Athabasca River* for the greater part of the season.

Congratulations are due Mr. and Mrs. J. Williamson on the birth of a son (James Petty Williamson) at Waterways on September 21.

The Fur Trade Commissioner, accompanied by Mr. M. R. Lubbock, visited Waterways on August 24 and 25 on their return from inspection of posts in Mackenzie River and Western Arctic districts.

A large building is being erected at Waterways to accommodate the salt plant of Industrial Minerals Limited, which is expected to be in operation next spring.

On September 4 a special train arrived at Waterways with Sir Edward Beatty and party. They were conveyed by the Company to the Abasand plant above Fort McMurray, where an inspection was made of the newly erected tar sand plant.

Large quantities of gasoline and supplies were handled by our boats in connection with the missing R.C.A.F. plane with Flight-Lieut. Coleman and Aircraftsman Fortey aboard.

We extend our sympathy to Captain D. B. Naylor, master of S.S. *Distributor*, who was badly burned on face and hands whilst proceeding in a small boat to his winter quarters at Wrigley. The boat accidentally caught fire eighty miles north of Fort Simpson but the captain, who was alone with his dogs, managed to make a landing where the latter, three days later, attracted the attention of passing trappers, who removed Captain Naylor to Fort Simpson hospital, where he was reported as doing well on October 28th. We wish him a speedy recovery.

H. L. Woolison was transferred to British Columbia district office in August and Grant Garden took over the duties previously performed by Mr. Woolison in the transport office.

J. Walker, loaned to this department for the summer, returned to the fur purchasing agency, Edmonton, on August 28.

The Transport office was transferred from Waterways to Winnipeg at the end of October.

The following, amongst others, patronized our service during the latter part of the summer: Rev. MacDonald, of the United Church, Edmonton; Bishop Breynat; the Misses Farrow, Keyes, Rogers, Harvey, Field and Solomon *en route* to the C. of E. mission, Aklavik; Miss Palmer for Hay River mission; Miss Labbe, J. W. Busby, H. V. Dempsey, Mr. Greenway, M. T. Jomha, Mr. Hogan, Dr. Homer, Mrs. McPhillamey, Colin Fraser, Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Ryan; Mr. Campbell, *en route* to Snowdrift; L. A. C. O. Hunt, District Manager John Bartleman, Misses Wilmot, Betts and Palmer; Mr. and Mrs. Mackinson, Miss V. McLeod, Rev. Sister Bourlai, L. Danes, John Ross, H. Ross, L. V. Dempsey, Messrs. Fraser and McLeod, Mrs. E. W. Reed; Mr. and Mrs. Pat Ryan; Mr. M. Meikle and family; Mr. and Mrs. C. G. Stevens; Rev. Sister Danureau, Rev. Father Serrurot; Mr. Hugh MacDonald, Sgt. R. L. Wells, Mr. T. Scurfield; Rev. Sister Maria; Messrs. F. Camsell, L. Roy, W. Wilson, F. Mehmel, and N. Wilding; Mrs. Butler.

Saskatchewan District

Since the last issue of *The Beaver*, the following have been amongst the visitors to district office: Mrs. J. Runcie, wife of the manager at Island Lake post; Mrs. W. A. Hunter, who arrived from England September 28 and proceeded immediately to Channing and Lac du Brochet to join her husband at that point; J. E. R. Wood, engineer in charge of the Jowsey mining property on the Echimamish river; G. B. Rizer, of Big River; R. D. Brooks, of Prince Albert; Captain H. L. Weber, of The Pas, and our old friend J. J. G. Rosser, of Prince Albert. Mr. Rosser was renewing acquaintances in Winnipeg after an absence of sixteen years.

Dr. A. W. Johnson, of the Geological Survey Party, Ottawa, visited us on his return from Berens River, where he spent the summer months in charge of the government survey operations at that point.

T. McEwan with his wife and family, returned from furlough in Scotland on October 1 and proceeded to Cumberland House post to relieve R. B. Urquhart, who has been appointed to the district office staff. Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Mitchell also arrived from Scotland on the same date and returned to Green Lake by automobile. A. W. Scott returned to Winnipeg on November 7 from furlough in Scotland.

The following staff changes have taken place in the district during the past three months: W. W. Lowrie transferred from Lac la Ronge to Pelican Narrows; J. C. Ross, of Cumberland House, resigned and was replaced by A. J. Slater, whom we welcome to Saskatchewan district; Apprentice A. J. G. Beaufoy was transferred to Superior-Huron district from God's Lake post; H. L. Woolison, who was attached to the district office staff, was transferred to British Columbia district office; D. G. Lemon was transferred from Clear Lake to Pine River; J. M. S. MacLeod, who was transport officer at Churchill during the summer months, has joined the staff at Cumberland House post.

The following members of the staff of Revillon Freres Trading Company are welcomed to the Hudson's Bay Company and Saskatchewan district: A. Ahenakew from Portage la Loche to Pine River post; E. J. McLean from Stanley to Clear Lake post; C. J. Lockhart-Smith in charge of Montreal Lake post; D. P. Gourley at South Reindeer Lake; Frank Henderson at Lac du Brochet; Curry McArthur at Wollaston Lake outpost; F. Schweder at Nueltin Lake, and S. Sanderson at Souris River.

Extensive alterations have been made to the store at Fort Alexander, which have greatly improved the appearance and utility of this building.

The extremely low water on the Saskatchewan river towards the close of navigation made fall freighting a very uncertain procedure. The S.S. *Tobin*, of the Ross Navigation Company, was unable to reach Cumberland House from The Pas, and grounded about fifteen miles from the post. The freighting was completed by canoes carrying light loads between the steamer and Pemican Portage. This is the first occasion on which navigation to Cumberland House by steamer has not been possible early in October.

The freeze-up in the Isle a la Crosse sector was a speedy business this year as only eight days elapsed between the use of floats and skis in the regular plane service, a vast change from ten years ago when Christmas generally saw the first winter mail.

Congratulations are being received by Mr. and Mrs. D. P. Gourley, of South Reindeer Lake, on the birth of a daughter on September 17, and also by Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Leslie, of Lac la Ronge, on the birth of a daughter on October 24.

D. Paterson, of Berens River, visited Winnipeg for medical attention during September, and returned to his post on October 14.

W. J. Gordon, who has been on sick leave since April last, returned to duty in Winnipeg on November 23.

In the last issue of *The Beaver*, we reported that William Mitchell, of Montreal Lake, underwent an operation for appendicitis during the latter part of May. We now have to report that he was flown out to Victoria Hospital, Prince Albert, early in October suffering from a serious case of lobar pneumonia and was in grave danger for about two weeks. His many friends throughout the district will be glad to learn that at the time of writing he is well on the way to recovery, although still confined to hospital.

C. E. Belanger, of Pine River post, retired on pension on October 31 after thirty-four years' service with the Company, which was spent entirely in Saskatchewan district. "Der Bluch" joined the service as apprentice clerk on July 17, 1902, and saw service first at Lac du Brochet post. He later served as post and outpost manager at Souris River, Buffalo River, Isle a la Crosse and Pine River, the latter post he established in 1921 and remained in charge until the date of his retirement.

The district manager returned to Winnipeg on October 3 after an extensive trip. Leaving Churchill on August 17 and making an unsuccessful attempt to find Nueltin Lake by air on that day, he was forced to return. Leaving again on the following day, the post was located after three and one-half hours in the air. From Nueltin Lake, Lac du Brochet, Wollaston Lake, Swan River, South Reindeer Lake, Pelican Narrows, Stanley, Lac la Ronge, Montreal Lake, Souris River, Pine River, Isle a la Crosse and Beauval were visited.

Due to a somewhat abnormal snowfall late in September and slush ice in the rivers, freighting operations to Deer Lake post were not completed during the navigation season. The small quantity of freight that is left over will be flown in as soon as ice conditions are favourable.

Nelson River District

The M.S. *Fort Severn* was hauled out on the government slipway, Churchill, on October 7, thus completing the freighting season for 1936.

S. Bradbury, chief engineer, and E. Batsone, second engineer, proceeded to their homes in Newfoundland on the completion of their summer work. W. J. Harvey was transferred to New Churchill post, where he will take up his new duties as clerk.

A fairly successful transport season was experienced, all freight, with the exception of a small shipment consigned to Nonala, being safely delivered. Owing to adverse weather conditions during the latter part of September and the early part of October the schooner was unable to make her scheduled call at Nonala post.

W. E. Brown returned to Winnipeg on October 8, after spending the summer visiting the following posts: Churchill, York Factory, Severn, Baker Lake, Eskimo Point, Caribou, Chesterfield Inlet, Repulse Bay and Tavane.

All members of the staff at the above named posts were in excellent health, with the exception of J. Spence (Baker Lake post), who proceeded to Winnipeg for medical attention.

The following staff changes took place during the past quarter:

Miss E. Little was transferred to Superior-Huron district during October, while Miss J. Fraser was transferred from the Fur Trade Commissioner's office to this district. We wish them the best of luck in their new appointments.

H. J. Mann has been transferred from Fort Churchill to the charge of Gillam post, relieving R. H. Cook, who has been promoted to the charge of Churchill post.

W. A. Watt, manager of Churchill post, resigned and left for his home in Scotland on the S.S. *Brandon*, accompanied by Mrs. Watt and daughter. We take this opportunity of wishing him every success in his new sphere of activities.

J. Spence and T. Crawford left for Scotland on furlough, the former being relieved as manager of Baker Lake post by A. Lunan.

W. Lyons left for Nonala for the purpose of taking over the management of that post, the present manager, G. Anderson, being due out on furlough.

Both A. Lunan and W. Lyons are newcomers to the district, having been in the employ of the Revillon Freres Trading Company. We welcome them to the district staff and wish them every success in the Company's service.

P. Dalrymple, who returned from furlough during the summer, is now at Baker Lake, A. J. Trafford being transferred from there to Tavane, where he will spend the winter as clerk. W. J. Mason has been transferred from Tavane to Eskimo Point, where he will assist W. Heslop.

W. Smart, clerk at Churchill during the summer, has been transferred to Nelson House, where he will be employed in the same capacity.

T. C. Moore and A. Anderson spent a few days at The Pas during the summer.

W. Smart and F. Schoales were resident for a few days in the hospital at Churchill, but we are glad to report that they are now back on duty none the worse for their short "rest."

H. Flett, manager of Big Beaver House outpost, spent a short time in Winnipeg during September and is now back at his outpost.

J. M. S. MacLeod, transport manager at Churchill, recently spent a few days in Winnipeg and has been transferred to Saskatchewan district.

It is with a feeling of the deepest regret that we have to record the tragic death by drowning of J. Turney, manager of the Revillon Freres Trading Company at Repulse Bay. Turney, accompanied by native "Tapati," went on a walrus hunt outside the ice-floe at Beach Point on May 20. Their canoe was attacked and damaged by a walrus, and they were forced to abandon the swamped craft. Tapati managed to reach and drag himself up on the floe edge, but Turney was unable to reach the ice. We extend our deepest sympathy to his family on their tragic loss.

Amongst the visitors at this office during the last quarter were R. S. Dalgleish, of the Montreal Shipping Company; R. McLennan, traffic supervisor, Saskatchewan government; Inspector Browne, Royal Canadian Mounted Police; and R. Starratt, of Starratt Airways.

We take this opportunity of congratulating H. J. Mann on the occasion of his wedding to Miss Lucille Wuckert, of Winnipeg, at Churchill, August 17. We wish them both happiness and success for the future.

W. G. McKinnie, of Swan Lake outpost, recently spent several weeks in the Flin Flon hospital. We are pleased to report that he is now completely recovered and has returned to his outpost.

Superior-Huron District

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. B. C. Lemon, Dinorwic, to whom a daughter was born October 5; and to Mr. and Mrs. V. A. Pauls, Sioux Lookout, on the arrival of a son and heir August 16; also to Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Salter, Sioux Lookout, on the birth of a daughter, September 4.

J. G. Boyd, Red Lake; A. Hughes, Osnaburgh; G. B. McLeod, Red Lake; M. S. Cook, Pagwa River; A. Riach, Cavell; and Miss M. Prior, Sioux Lookout, have all been in Winnipeg recently.

We were also pleased to have a visit from Mr. Chas. Wilson, of the Patricia Transportation Company, and Mr. R. W. Starratt, of Starratt Airways. Bishop Dewdney and Canon Sanderson were visitors at Cat Lake the end of August.

Wm. Gregory, manager at Pine Ridge, is in hospital at Toronto recuperating slowly from a recent serious operation. S. A. Taylor, our manager at Long Lake, has returned to duty from sick leave and reports that he has fully recovered.

Owing to ill health Roland Roy, apprentice clerk, has been forced to retire from the service. He was stationed at Gogama post.

Apprentice A. J. Beaufoy has been transferred from God's Lake post, Saskatchewan district, to English River. J. A. Burgesse, has been transferred from Pointe Bleue, St. Lawrence district, to the management of Gogama post, succeeding J. A. Wynd.

We welcome two new members to the Fur Trade: Leslie Martin, who is at present assisting at Long Lake post, and Douglas McCullough, who has been taken over from the Winnipeg retail store staff for duty at Sioux Lookout post.

M. S. Cook is at present at Cavell relieving A. Riach, who is on vacation.

C. W. Taylor, outpost manager at Kagainagami, was married to Miss Lorette Gascon, of Hardrock, on September 19. We wish them both every happiness.

M. Cowan, district manager, and H. E. Cooper paid a visit to Sioux Lookout, Geraldton and Long Lake recently.

Miss M. L. Ross, district office stenographer, has been transferred to the Fur Trade Commissioner's office, after serving five years with this district. Miss E. Little, Nelson River district stenographer, has succeeded Miss Ross.

We understand that R.C.A.F. planes have been working in the territory to the north of Cat Lake post mapping the area to Windigo Lake and Trout Lake.

A water and sanitary system has been installed at Sioux Lookout post.

James Bay District

Albany post is famous for its spring floods, but the one experienced in 1936 is the worst in history, and regarding which Post Manager R. Gordon writes as follows:

"It had been a late cold spring and everyone was surprised to see the river

move as early as May 15. There had been very little mild weather and the old-timers were predicting a late break-up. However, as the head waters of the Albany are far to the south, the gathering waters exercised sufficient pressure to start a movement down here. The ice kept moving out through the south channel during the forenoon of the 15th, and then late in the afternoon it jammed tight. Water started coming over the bank at 4 p.m. and rose to a height of two or three feet, which was just sufficient for us to paddle around by canoe, and we paid a short visit to Reverend R. A. Joselyn at the Anglican mission to see how he was faring.

"Next morning we noticed that our powder magazine had been lifted off its foundations and had floated about one hundred yards down stream. Apprentice Drury and I attempted to reach it by canoe but, owing to new ice having formed around the willows, we were unable to reach it. However, later in the day we managed to get through and salvaged our gun powder, as by good luck the magazine had remained upright.

"On Sunday, 17th, the water gradually receded and we were able to move around on foot. At 3 p.m. on Monday the ice started to move again, and the water rose swiftly until at 3.45 p.m. it was up to the doorstep of our dwelling. Though there have been many floods at Albany, the water had never yet covered the ground floor of the post manager's residence, it being built on a knoll higher from sea level than any other building on Albany island.

"We had all gathered on the veranda to view the ice going out but, as the water was steadily rising and at last started to cover the ground floor, we deemed it expedient to make preparations for departure. The ice, at the first movement on the 15th, had made a protective barrier in front of our home, which is situated about thirty yards from the edge of the bank, but with the steady rising water and side pressure from the movement this barrier began moving in towards the house. Farther up the river, where the bank is lower, the ice was moving in towards the Indian settlement and floating down stream at the rear of the post and between our house and the bush. At this time we noticed the Anglican mission school swinging off its foundations and floating towards us. This was the deciding factor, so we immediately bundled into our canoe, which was tied handy by the veranda, and after a hectic ten minutes threading our way through ice pans we managed to reach the comparative safety of the willows. There we met our interpreter William Louttit and his family, who, notwithstanding they had erected stages on which to live during the height of the flood, had been obliged to abandon them on account of the exceptionally high water.

"We paddled with them back into the bush in the hope of finding a dry spot, but even the higher ridges were under water. Later we met Mr. and Mrs. Graham with their pointer, and glad we were to accept their hospitality, for in the haste of departure we had no food or bedding, while they were well supplied in this respect.

"While talking to the Grahams we heard someone shouting in the direction of the Anglican mission, so Apprentice Drury and I paddled over to investigate and found Reverend R. A. Joselyn on the porch of the school endeavouring to save his livestock, which he had swum over from the barn. We were able to assist him in getting the cow on top of the wood pile, which was the only spot not covered with water.

"We then returned to the Graham's boat and prepared to pass the night out. There were eleven of us to be housed; Mr. and Mrs. Graham and family, Reverend R. A. Joselyn, Apprentice Drury and myself and family. It was a miserably cold night and there was very little room for comfort, but we nevertheless settled down, fervently hoping that the water would recede before morning.

"We were disappointed in this however, for the water covered the island for over a week. The recession was very gradual, only a few inches per day, until at last on 24th May we were able to paddle down the small creek on which we were anchored and return to the post. In the interval we remained in the pointer, making periodic trips to the post by canoe for supplies and to salvage what we could. We had a tent erected over the boat and a stove on board, and thus were able to pass the time in reasonable comfort.

"The Albany flood of 1936 is therefore a historic one, for the water reached a higher level than ever before recorded. As already mentioned, the floor of the manager's residence was never before known to be covered, but this spring the water reached the height of ten inches, and in the store almost to the height of the counter. Much structural damage was done, three Indian houses being badly smashed and the ice passed clean through our oil shed, which was directly in its path. Board walks were floated away, the powder magazine moved and much damage was done at the Anglican mission and at the Revillon post. Worst of all was a deposit of mud on the floors of all our buildings which was in some cases three inches thick, and to return to such a mess was not a very cheerful home-coming."

The wedding bells rang merrily in James Bay district during the last quarter. On Monday, August 3, R. B. Carson, of Weenusk post, was married to Miss Isa Gordon, of Glasgow, Scotland, Reverend Father Paul Langlois, O.M.I., Father Superior, officiating. The usher was R. C. Ross, of Weenusk post; best man, R. M. Duncan, of Attawapiskat post.

On 28th September, at St. Thomas church, Moose Factory, Miss Irene Ridgedale and D. C. Bremner were married. Reverend Gilbert Thompson officiated. The bride was given in marriage by the district manager, J. W. Anderson, while Miss Lorna Tyrer acted as bridesmaid, and P. J. Soper as best man. D. C. Bremner takes charge of Attawapiskat post in succession to R. M. Duncan, who is going out on furlough. We extend our hearty felicitations to the young couples of Attawapiskat and Weenusk.

We extend our felicitations to Reverend R. A. and Mrs. Joselyn on the arrival of their first-born. Mrs. Joselyn returned to Albany in August and will remain with her husband throughout the winter.

In October Reverend Canon Gould, general secretary of the M.S.C.C., paid a visit of inspection to the Anglican mission at Moose Factory, while earlier in the summer Colonel Mermagen, of the Indian Residential School Commission, made a trip of inspection to Fort George in the M.K. *Fort Churchill*, on which occasion he was accompanied by Miss Wallace, who takes up duties at the Anglican mission there. Earlier in the summer Mrs. Morrow, from Rupert's House, returned from United Kingdom to join her husband, Reverend George Morrow, at Rupert's House.

The new hospital at the Anglican mission, Moose Factory, was completed during the summer, and is a very creditable addition to the mission establishment.

S. C. Kerr, big game hunter, of Steubenville, Ohio, was again in James Bay area, accompanied by G. Fellows and R. L. Fricke. They had planned to secure a walrus group for the Carnegie Museum and, although everything was organized to this end, the ice conditions absolutely prohibited the execution of this hunt. The party travelled by M.K. *Fort Churchill* from Moosonee to Belcher, and from the post they used the M.B. *Scotia* to reach the walrus islands. Two attempts were made but, as the ice was jammed in all around the north end of the Belcher islands, they had perforce to abandon the hunt. The expedition, however, was not entirely a failure, for the party secured five polar bears on the way north. These were sighted from the *Fort Churchill* and the hunt, which was very exciting, did not occupy much time.

Reverend J. M. Crissall, of St. Paul's Church, Toronto, paid a missionary visit to the Indians and Eskimos of Great Whale River and Belcher Islands on behalf of the Bishop of the Arctic. Mr. Crissall travelled in the M.K. *Fort Churchill*, and at Whale River he had large and enthusiastic congregations. Natives, however, were not so numerous at Belcher post, for they did not congregate as at Great Whale River.

Father Provincial Marchand, of Montreal, accompanied by Father Schultz, "the flying priest," made an aeroplane inspection of the various missions on James Bay, and after his departure we learned that Father Belleau, of Fort George, had been appointed vicar provincial. We extend our congratulations to Father Belleau in his promotion, and wish him every success in his new sphere of activity.

Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Cargill have again had a very successful summer with their gardens. They have now secured a greenhouse and have greatly extended the flower plots. They were particularly successful with roses, a bouquet of which was sent as far away as Attawapiskat for the wedding of Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Carson.

For staff transfers we have to record that Apprentice Jeffrey, who was for some time at Moose Factory, was transferred to Great Whale River, while Apprentice Merrill, also of Moose Factory, was transferred to Attawapiskat. Apprentice J. B. Tyrer came from Belcher post to take up duties at Moose Factory. P. J. Soper, after being temporarily in charge of Moosonee post from 1st June to 31st October, gives over the charge of this post to D. G. Boyd, recently returned from furlough in Scotland. G. Dunn, of Eastmain, was transferred to the charge of Neoskweskau post, while W. B. Anderson, formerly of Revillon Freres, takes his place. W. R. Cargill, of Moose Factory, made a short visit to Montreal in October. Edward Corston, formerly at Attawapiskat, moved down to Moose Factory and takes charge of the Hannah Bay camp trade.

Dr. W. L. Tyrer, Indian agent at Moose Factory, after completing his flight with the treaty party, made his usual inspections of the James Bay posts in the M.B. *Charles Stewart*. Mrs. Tyrer and the children returned to reside at Moose Factory for the winter, excepting young Tom, who

is in college. During September the Indian agent had a visit from his brother, Dr. Roy Tyrer, of Barrie, Ontario, who was accompanied by Mrs. Tyrer. Doctor and Mrs. Tyrer greatly enjoyed their visit to Moose, especially as they were able to meet their son, Apprentice J. B. Tyrer, who had just returned from Belcher post.

Constable L. W. Hopkins made his usual patrols in James Bay area during the summer season and in the autumn. After a visit from Inspector Mercier, we learned that he had been promoted to acting lance-corporal. We take pleasure in extending our felicitations to L. W. Hopkins.

St. Lawrence District

J. A. Burgesse, assistant at Pointe Bleue post, has been appointed to the charge of Gogama post in the Superior-Huron district. We wish him every success on his promotion.

Recent transfers of staff within the district include: Apprentice P. Letellier from Romaine to Natashquan; Apprentice J. Fiset from Natashquan to Bersimis; Apprentice E. McVey from Blanc Sablon to Seven Islands; Apprentice H. A. Graham from Obijuan to Weymontachingue; Apprentice A. L. Trimingham from Bersimis to Romaine; Apprentice J. Stevenson from Oskelaneo to Pointe Bleue.

J. Thevenet, who was employed in the St. Maurice section during the summer, left on the last trip of the S.S. *Sable I* for Mutton Bay post.

H. G. Evans, former post manager at Bersimis, returned from England in October and was transferred to British Columbia district.

Since the last issue of *The Beaver* the following post managers have visited district office: T. D. Lindley, Seven Islands; P. Camiot, Natashquan; A. E. Briard, Senneterre; W. Jefferys, Mistassinny; A. S. Ritchie, Chibougamau; H. B. Frankland, Obijuan; J. L. P. Plamondon, Weymontachingue. Apprentices H. A. Graham, P. Letellier and H. R. Cummings also visited district office.

Post Manager F. McLeod, of Woswonaby, went to North Bay for medical attention, and we are pleased to learn that he has benefited from his operation. He returned to his post before freeze-up.

Apprentice J. Stevenson had a minor operation at the Royal Victoria Hospital in September and has since returned to duty.

H. R. Conn called at district office before returning to Grand Lac.

J. E. and Madame Perreault, of Moisie, passed a short holiday visiting friends and relatives at St. Simeon and Lake St. John, and spent a few days in Montreal before returning to Moisie.

E. J. and Mrs. Haight, of Oskelaneo, are the proud parents of a daughter born at Ryland, Ontario, October 8, 1936. A young fur trader arrived at Bersimis on October 10, 1936, third son of G. A. and Mrs. Beare.

Congratulations to Post Manager H. B. Frankland, of Obijuan, on his marriage to Miss Laura Dionne. The happy couple spent their honeymoon in Montreal

Our visitors' record at Pointe Bleue post for the past summer contains the names of over three hundred and fifty persons. Tourists from many points in Canada, the United States of America, as well as from Scotland, England, Ireland, France and Germany are listed.

H. E. Cooper, merchandise manager, visited Bersimis and Seven Islands posts during October.

In a fire which swept the premises of the Montreal Boatbuilders Limited at Lachine on October 8, the Company's motor boat *Fort Amadjuak* was completely destroyed, as well as over a dozen other motor vessels.

Fall gales on the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence have been unusually severe this season, resulting in considerable damage to wharves, boats, etc. At Blanc Sablon the upper structure of our wharf was damaged by heavy seas and the wharves at Forteau Bay, Greenley Island and the West Room on Isle au Bois were carried away.

Major D. L. McKeand and members of the Canadian Government 1936 Arctic Expedition, who made the voyage on the S.S. *Nascopie*, were met on their arrival at Montreal, *en route* to Ottawa, by the Fur Trade Commissioner and some of the Montreal staff.

Other Arctic veterans who passed through Montreal on their way to Winnipeg were: Mgr. A. Turquetil; James Cantley, of the Fur Trade Commissioner's office; W. Gibson and Alan B. Fraser, of Ungava district; and C. M. and Mrs. Duncan and J. Berthe, of Revillon Freres Trading Company Limited.

Reverend H. A. and Mrs. Turner, of Pangnirtung, Cumberland Gulf, spent a few days in Montreal before sailing for England.

Post Manager Chesley Russell, of Dundas Harbour, after handing over to representatives of the Quebec Zoological Gardens three white bear cubs which were brought south on the S.S. *Nascopie*, came on to Montreal. He underwent an operation at the Royal Victoria and thereafter went to his home in Newfoundland on furlough.

Captain T. F. Smellie called *en route* from Halifax to Winnipeg, having seen the good ship *Nascopie* laid up in winter quarters after still another successful voyage to the Eastern Arctic.

Members of other districts' staffs who have recently been in Montreal include: S. H. Parsons, manager of Labrador district, and A. F. Wilson, of the same district; W. R. Cargill, A. H. Michell and E. G. Cadney, of James Bay district; R. Jardine, of Western Arctic district; Jas. Spence and Thomas Crawford, Nelson River district.

G. Dunn, of James Bay district, travelled by air from Oskelaneo to assume charge of his new post, Neoskweskau.

E. A. Brucey, formerly of the staff of Revillon Freres Trading Company, returned from the Old Country and, after a few days in Montreal, proceeded to Winnipeg.

We regret to report that Jackie Payne, son of Post Manager John Payne, of Mutton Bay post, died following an accident on November 2. Efforts were made immediately after the accident to get Jackie to hospital at Harrington Harbour by motor boat, but he died on the way. Sincere sympathy of the staff throughout the district is extended to Mr. and Mrs. Payne.

W. C. Newbury, who is at present at Mutton Bay, returns to Montreal about the end of November.

Congratulations to Brian Edmund, fourteen year old son of J. H. A. and Mrs. Wilmot, who gained by examination one of the four scholarships tenable for four years awarded annually by the Catholic School Commission of the City of Montreal.

During the past quarter we have had numerous callers, including: Garon Pratte, K.C., and Major C. G. Dunn, of Quebec; Right Rev. A. L. Fleming, D.D., Bishop of the Arctic; Retired Officers W. E. Swaffield, F. C. Gaudet and A. E. Dodman; Mrs. K. Keddie, of International Grenfell Association, Cartwright; Captain J. Lloyd, S.S. *Waziristan*; Mr. Lloyd Rochester, director, Prospectors Airways Limited; Noel Ogilvie, Ottawa; Dr. A. Nave, Berlin, Germany; J. N. Leonard, Bennington, Vermont, a regular visitor in the Mistassinny area, who was accompanied by his mother and father; John Mench, New York City, who owns "Chimo" camp in the Manouan territory; Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Parsons, of South Portland, Maine; D. MacKay, F. W. Gasston, J. C. Atkins, of Canadian Committee office; M. R. Lubbock, W. C. Nelson, J. C. Donald, of the Fur Trade Commissioner's office; A. Brock, Wine and Spirit Department, Winnipeg; J. E. Perras, Revillon Freres Trading Company Limited.

Labrador District

The auxiliary *Jacques Revillon* in charge of Capt. Isaac Barbour arrived at Bay Roberts in late October, where she is moored for the winter. Capt. Barbour speaks highly of her seagoing qualities.

The *Fort Garry* reported from Hopedale on November 1st bound south. This is her last voyage for the season. She has practically a full load of codfish and pickled trout from the northern section of the district.

W. J. Cobb, late manager of Hopedale post, returned in September from Montreal, where he took a fur grading course under Mr. Mehmel. Mr. Cobb will relieve J. S. Blackhall of the charge of Cartwright post during October.

In October the district manager visited Montreal, where he met the Fur Trade Commissioner for discussion of matters pertaining to the district.

Abram Bromfield, late of Wakeham Bay post, is wintering at St. John's.

Chesley Russell arrived here in October on furlough. He is spending the winter with his parents at Bay Roberts.

We regret to record the death of Thomas Leo Blake, of Northwest River. Uncle Tom, as he was familiarly known, had reached the age of ninety-five years. To his son Gilbert (who will be remembered as one of Mrs. Hubbard's guides on her notable cross-country trip to Ungava some years ago) and Donald, of Edmonton, we extend sincere sympathy.

We also record the passing of Andrew Chaulk, another old-timer of Grois Water Bay, and well known to former post managers of Northwest River.

Mr. Andrew Grieve, who has been operating a saw mill on his timber areas in Kipakok Bay, Labrador, during the past summer, recently paid us a visit.

J. Maurice returned to England in September.

Mr. R. B. Job also took passage to the Old Country in October.

J. H. Colville, president of the Labrador Mining and Exploration Company, was a visitor in September. His company is operating in the Aschaunapi area and in future will have a base at Northwest River, operating two planes from there in conjunction with the Newfoundland Skyways.

J. E. Keats, manager at Northwest River, reports building operations very

active in that place this year and, with the addition of several new buildings, it is rapidly becoming a fair sized village, and a pretty one at that, especially during the summer months. Gardening is carried on quite successfully, as a much earlier summer is usually experienced there than at places on the outside coast line.

J. S. Blackhall and family arrived at St. John's from Cartwright via the S.S. *Kyle* on November 9 *en route* to Scotland, where they will spend the winter.

W. E. Swaffield, Jr., wife and children were passengers also from Cartwright and will spend some time in St. John's before proceeding to Montreal.

Ungava District

The R.M.S. *Nascopie* docked at Halifax on October 1, one day ahead of schedule, having completed this year one of the most successful of her many voyages to Hudson Bay and the Eastern Arctic.

Among the members of the Fur Trade staff on board were four post managers returning to civilization on furlough: James Bell, late of Lake Harbour post, Gordon Webster from Fort McKenzie post, James Smith from Pond's Inlet post, and Chesley Russell from Dundas Harbour post. We have since heard from the first three, who are spending their vacations in Scotland and apparently enjoying themselves. Mr. Russell is now at home in Newfoundland, having been delayed in Montreal for a time, where he underwent a slight and successful operation.

W. G. Calder, late of Sugluk post, returned to civilization *via* Churchill, Manitoba, during August, and is at present on furlough in Scotland.

W. Gibson, inspector, and A. B. Fraser, section manager, Ungava Bay, proceeded from Halifax to Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg, and have since been engaged in district office.

The M.S. *Fort Garry* successfully completed supplying Ungava Bay posts and left for the south by the middle of August.

The new post at Diana Bay was officially opened for business during August, with S.C. Knapp in charge. We wish Mr. Knapp success in his new charge, and hope that material for picture making will be no less abundant in Ungava than at Clyde.

W. E. Swaffield and family joined the *Fort Garry* at Port Burwell and proceeded to Davis Inlet for a stopover before going on to St. John's.

A. Broomfield also joined the *Fort Garry* at Diana Bay and is spending the winter in St. John's.

We were pleased to welcome Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Smith and Audrey, formerly of Ungava district, but more recently in the Labrador, who are now settled down at Fort Chimo, and Apprentice Hambling, who came up on the *Fort Garry*. Nelson Adams was transferred from Lake Harbour and is now assistant at Payne Bay. A newcomer to the service is N. Mackenzie, of Revillon Freres. We welcome N. Mackenzie to the service and wish him every success. C. N. Stephen, who has been in business in Aberdeen for the past two years, is again north, and relieved Gordon Webster at Fort McKenzie.

Other staff changes were: J. W. Bruce, from Fort Chimo to Whale River; J. T. Ford, from Whale River to George's River.

We also welcome Rev. Ronald Wenham, who relieved Rev. Gillespie at Fort Chimo, and wish him every success in his work.

After completing an inspection of the Ungava Bay posts on the *Jacques Revillon*, A. B. Fraser joined the *Nascopie* at Port Burwell.

D. A. Wilderspin, returning from furlough, assumed charge of Lake Harbour post. A. M. Stanners was transferred from Stupart's Bay post to the charge of Pond's Inlet post. T. C. Carmichael, returning from furlough, assumed charge of Stupart's Bay post. Mr. Carmichael returned to the district with his bride. We extend him congratulations, wish them both every happiness and hope they will like their new home. L. Coates was promoted from Pangnirtung post to charge of Port Burwell post. We wish Mr. Coates every success in his new responsibility. E. B. Maurice, returning from furlough in far-off New Zealand, was appointed to the charge of Sugluk post; Apprentice Bruce Campbell from Cape Smith to Port Harrison; Apprentice L. Hodgson from Port Harrison to Southampton Island; E. Lyall from Port Burwell to Arctic Bay; Apprentice T. Harwood from Dundas Harbour to Pangnirtung; Apprentice Stevenson from Pond's Inlet to Arctic Bay.

We have pleasure in welcoming to the district Dr. and Mrs. Orford and children (Dr. Orford relieved Dr. MacKinnon as medical and health officer at Pangnirtung); Miss F. Giles, who comes as nurse to Pangnirtung Hospital, relieving Nurse Hockin, who returned to civilization after five years' service; Rev. M. Flint, who takes up his missionary labours at Pond's Inlet.

We cannot neglect to mention that from Churchill to the end of the voyage we enjoyed greatly the congenial and pleasant company of the tourist passengers who joined the ship at that point. Mr. Henry J. Patten, Dr. John M. Wilcox and Professor John Q. Adams did, we feel sure, find the voyage interesting and enjoyable, while their company was greatly appreciated.

A major undertaking this year in the northern area was the closing of Dundas Harbour post and the re-opening of Tukik post, which is situated on Arctic Bay, Baffin Land. Admirable weather and ice conditions prevailed and operations were expeditiously carried through to completion. The embarking and disembarking of native families with all their earthly belongings and several hundred dogs created one of the most interesting and animated scenes of the *Nascopie's* voyage.

Lancaster Sound was remarkably free from ice and a record crossing was made to Arctic Bay, where the steamer anchored for four days. Full use was made of this time in re-establishing and outfitting the post. A new staff dwelling, designed on the most up-to-date lines, took shape with surprising rapidity, and by the time the *Nascopie* sailed needed only shingles on the roof to complete its comfortable appearance. Arctic Bay is one of those interesting and beautiful locations it is always pleasant to come across, and, despite the frost and light snowfall in the first week of September, we looked forward to visiting it again. Post Manager Alan Scott and his staff were left very busily engaged on their buildings and supplies, ably assisted by the Eskimos.

Chesley Russell, post manager at Dundas Harbour post last outfit, is to be congratulated on the ambitious sled journey he accomplished so successfully last spring. Leaving the post during March, he made a long tour to the west and north of Devon Island. Crossing Jones Sound, he visited the R.C.M. Police post at Craig Harbour, Ellesmere Island, returning across Jones Sound and the Devon Island ice cap to Dundas Harbour. Mr. Russell collected much valuable data on the game and resources of the region, as well as observations on the geography of the island and extent of the ice cap.

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A Modern Fur Trade Journey

(Continued from page 17)

As the afternoon sky cleared and brightened we took off for the city of Edmonton, three hundred miles to the south, and the end of our flight from the Arctic coast.

The visible signs of civilization below were fast meeting us as we sped south. The thin band of steel which was the Northern Alberta railway passed under us occasionally. We lost the friendly rivers of the North as the Athabasca stretched westwards to its source in the Rockies. Population increased beneath, at first straggling clearances and log farm buildings, later well cultivated farms, small towns, genuine roads and the inevitable grain elevators at wayside railway stations.

Finally Edmonton city could be seen in the distant haze as the ship turned her nose towards Cooking Lake, the summer air base twenty-six miles from the city.

Landing on the calm surface of the lake, we were soon berthed at the pier. Bathers and excursionists watched us disembark. Bathing and refreshment booths, automobiles, telegraph poles, a fine motor road, glaring advertisements, the Alberta summer heat, all expressed the fact that the Far North had vanished behind us.

Within three hours from landing on Cooking Lake, I was on board the Canadian National trans-continental train bound for Montreal. The temperature was around 90°, even during the evenings, and the heat felt terrific to one coming directly from the cool breezes of the Arctic coast. An air-conditioned car was an innovation to be welcomed. Past its windows the sun-baked prairie glided by, in strong contrast to the blue sea ice of Coronation Gulf just left behind a few days previously.

Montreal was reached on the 13th of July, and the following morning I sailed on board the R.M.S. *Nascopie*. The Eastern Arctic itinerary lay ahead, comprising some 10,000 miles of voyaging.

It would be vain to attempt to describe this ten-weeks voyage in so limited a space —the St. Lawrence valley, Labrador, Hudson Strait, and the broad expanse of historic Hudson Bay; the long journey north from Churchill (the prairie seaport) to Baffin Bay, Lancaster Sound (the eastern gateway to the Polar Sea), and far north Ellesmere Land. The voyage of the *Nascopie* to the scattered outposts of civilization in the Eastern Arctic remains from year to year an unique and striking maritime achievement. Such an itinerary cannot be crowded into a few words even to round off this short article.

At Arctic Bay on northwest Baffin Land I was not so very far off from my starting point at King William Land during April, having nearly completed an unusual circle of travel within the Dominion. I was not in the least surprised to meet on north Baffin Land several Eskimo acquaintances who had traded into King William Land post during past years. They had made the journey home to their native Baffin Land with dog teams. They could not realize that I had seen their friends and countrymen of Boothia Peninsula in Western Arctic as recently as the spring of this year. The "Magic Carpet" was beyond their comprehension.

At Arctic Bay the snow-covered hills and keen September air—for there were several degrees of frost there—typified the Far North. It is the turning point in the voyage of the *Nascopie*. The rugged shores of Lancaster Sound and the icebergs of Baffin Bay slipped gradually behind as we forged south for the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the port of Halifax. Within three weeks from leaving Arctic Bay we were rolling through the autumn beauty of the Maritime Provinces for Montreal and Winnipeg. The 15,000-mile journey was at an end.

The Conquest of Mount Waddington

(Continued from page 46)

The two men had hoped to cross to the south peak after the ascent by roping down. This proved impossible as the ridge between the two peaks was completely covered with ice. They descended by the same route as they had climbed and arrived at their camp at 2.00 a.m.

The morale of our party was at a low ebb. Three men were laid up, one with a bad case of sunstroke, and the rest of the boys were worn out after their bad start and four unsuccessful attempts. And now, with the snow falling in earnest, we abandoned all hope of reaching the peak.

July 24th: Snow fell steadily all night and in the morning we awoke to find ourselves pretty well snowed in.

Dobson and Grassi came into camp about noon, having been forced to leave the upper camp before they became completely snowed in. Even so, they had to feel out the old trail on hands and knees, despite the fact that the route around the crevassed icefall had been flagged at fifty-foot intervals with rattan markers.

Our camp resembled Little America. There were two rows of glacier tents and only a flat stretch of snow fading out into the impenetrable blizzard.

July 25th: We nearly froze to death during the night and were really surprised to awaken to a clear, cold sunrise. Waddington had a fresh coating of snow, making any further attempts impossible in the limited time left to us.

We made plans for activities for the next three days. Four of the party left to ascend Mount Bell, an 11,000-foot peak some ten miles to the northwest. Dobson, Grassi, Henderson and myself decided to climb the north peak of Waddington. We figured this peak would be in fair condition to climb after one day of sun. The remaining three set out to climb two small peaks to the south of Waddington, planning to return to Icefall the following morning.

Those of us in camp spent a leisurely day and watched the Bell party make the pass to the east of their objective late in the afternoon.

July 26th: We were up and away by 3.00 a.m., thanks to our preparations of the previous night. The intense cold during the night left the snow in excellent condition and we were in high spirits for the climb. We ascended to twelve thousand feet on the north ridge before the sun had any effect on the crusted snow surface. From here on we were all affected by the altitude and were forced to change leadership on the rope continuously.

Breaking trail was a difficult task as the windswept slope would be ice in one spot and deep powdered snow in the next, and both surfaces seemed the same to the naked eye.

I shall never forget the sight that met my eyes when we eventually surmounted the last steep snow slope. I was on the lead during the last few feet. It was with a sigh of relief that I reached up with my ice axe to get a firm grip on the top of the ridge. But there was nothing there at all! Just space! The peak, entirely different from any I had ever seen, was just a knife-edge ridge. I was forced to chop a saddle and sit straddle-legged on top to take pictures. From this position the main tower of Waddington, although only sixty feet above us, was an awe-inspiring sight. Its sheer walls dropped thousands of feet on either side and were studded with huge patches of crystal snow. Even if we didn't make the main peak, it was worth the trip to see this great mountain rearing its defiant head into the cloud-swept sky!

This was the nearest we got to the summit of Mount Waddington. That night the weather broke and on 29th July we packed out.

Though we failed in our objective to climb Waddington, we had ascended two magnificent peaks and had seen it proved that Mount Waddington can be climbed.

To Fritz Weissner went the credit of conquering North America's most difficult mountain, and we who had seen this peak from close quarters were not ashamed to admit our failure. Our hats are off to Weissner.

Set Thine House in Order

(Continued from page 56)

such compact partitions that the greatest space in each basement is now used for a recreation room. Piping was reorganized and enclosed in attractive pillars and beams. Breakneck stairs were scrapped and wide sane ones erected. So, out of each cellar chaos emerged a generous store room, an efficiently equipped laundry, a modern furnace room with an up-to-date furnace, and a large, inviting recreation room.

When structural changes were completed, Store interior decorators carefully studied each room and handled it, not only from the aspect of individual charm, but also in harmonious relation to the rest of the house. (*i.e.*, In the Stradbrooke house the whole ground floor is done in white, off white and palest grey with glorious contrasts in deep blue, rich red and regal gold!)

To get a true vision of these two houses, you must realize that Luxton Avenue and Stradbrooke Avenue are in two widely different sections of Winnipeg. Thus, these homes are ideally situated to illustrate remodelling, redecorating and furnishing in two remote moods. 123 Luxton has an atmosphere of friendly charm, while 602 Stradbrooke breathes a tempo that is vibrant with new colour harmonies and dramatic settings. Yet either treatment could be easily adapted to homes of a different scale. Both have indirect lighting throughout, venetian blinds, smart window cornices, wall to wall rugs in important rooms, and every modern labour saving device.

Interior highlights at 123 Luxton Avenue include a black vitrolite fireplace (vitrolite is a new product of scientifically treated glass, resembling a highly glazed marble); a horizontal panel of frosted glass between living and dining room to utilize cleverly the most daylight for each; a sparkling efficient kitchen; a boy's bedroom, masculine to the "nth" degree; a gay sun porch, previously a cold barren balcony; a merry playroom transformed from an old unfinished attic; a cosy basement recreation

room set off by an inviting fireplace and grained wood wall papers.

The spacious Stradbrooke house has windows that are unique and practical, being hinged to the sills to swing inward, thus causing air currents to shoot upwards and provide no-draft ventilation. It is hot water heated and the radiators are concealed by attractive metal covers.

There is not space to mention all the noteworthy points, but here are a few of them. Large vestibule with washroom off it near the entrance; Italian marble fireplace; striking blue mirror; sectional furniture; marboleum kitchen flooring that curves up the side of the walls to form baseboard and eliminates all dust-catching corners; monel-metal kitchen table tops; spacious cupboards and built-in bedroom drawers; a completely equipped office; a non-skid bathtub and vitrolite bathroom walls.

The master bedroom suite is stunning in its simplicity. A bedroom with a feminine boudoir, a masculine dressing room and a cork floored and walled bathroom off it. Then there is a playroom straight out of fairyland and a merry recreation room complete with fireplace, bar, polished dance floor and "Rhythm" wall paper.

Both Luxton and Stradbrooke houses feature new ideas easily adapted to any home and, through the new Government Rehabilitation Plan, the small property owner can now raise money for remodelling or repairing his house or installing permanent fixtures.

Think what splendid effect this plan may have on the Dominion as a whole. When living standards are raised and children are provided with homes and backgrounds of which they can be proud, the psychological reaction is definitely a future generation of finer citizens.

When the Weather Went "Screwy"

(*Continued from page 28*)

turns so sharp that around a bend one hears a stranger thrashing in the willows, hails him, and finds it is his bowman. Down Frog creek in total darkness save for the glow of a fire to the south.

Down the Ottertail in the chilly hours of early morning. To the left a break in the black wall of the forest; ahead a widening of our vague pathway. The Ogoki!

Eastward between swampy shores with a headwind in our faces. "Hey, you loafers! Roll out and swing a paddle."

We camped at dawn on a bit of high ground surrounded by marsh, and the mosquitoes had a feast while we made breakfast and put up tents. We decided that we would make provisions in our wills for a fleet of airplanes to spray flit over the northland.

It was late afternoon when we awoke. North-bound Lansdowne House Indians were passing. We hailed them; asked if they had seen my note. They had, and would tell any south-bound men that they might meet to deliver it.

We were eating breakfast when three south-bound Lansdowne fellows paddled up. We gave them tobacco and oatmeal, which they ate out of their frying pan. They had heard about the message and would carry it to Ombabika.

At Amy Falls we hoped to get trout, but caught only wall-eyes before we embarked again on the now fast-flowing river. Running rapid after rapid, we came the following afternoon to Ogoki lake. The sun was low when we floated out on the still surface of this lovely lake to find the north shore burning in four places.

Next morning, eating our breakfast on the rocks of our island campsite, we could see no land and felt as though we were at sea in impenetrable fog.

It was sickening to see this beautiful lake being scarred by fire, but we cheered ourselves with the thought that the south side at least might escape. Then near the eastern end, where the lake is very narrow, we rounded a point and saw, on the south shore, a curl of smoke. We beached our canoes and investigated. It was only a small fire smoldering over an area perhaps two hundred feet square. For two hours we trenched around it with our axes, carried water in our pots and pans. That night we had rain, the first since the thunder shower that had started all the trouble. Perhaps the south shore of Ogoki lake is as lovely as ever and the north shore burned only in spots.

We were searching for the portage at the first heavy rapids on the north channel of the Ogoki's twenty-mile long island when we heard the cry for which we had listened in vain at Speckled Trout rapids and all the others in between. "A trout! An honest-to-God trout!" It came from Johnny Somes, who, rod in hand, had disappeared into the dense underbrush the moment we had landed at the head of the rapids.

The fish had struck twice without being hooked, and for all our efforts he is still there in his little pool under the overhanging cedar. But before George and Duncan had found the portage on a tiny channel to the north, we had landed two others.

The fishing in the Ogoki was far below expectations. Why, we cannot make even an intelligent guess. Just luck, I fancy. And heat and fires had put us so far behind our schedule that there was no chance to reach the Whitefish. But for a week we had a glorious time on the river.

We had no fire scares and caught as many two-pound "squaretails" as we could eat, though we had to work hard for them. The weather was superb, and somehow we seemed able to stand the mosquitoes in bigger doses.

But what delighted us most was the river itself—a big river, even though split into several channels; a high-spirited river that runs with a will to its meeting with the Albany; a river of rapids where the canoeman must wager his skill and strength against the power of cross currents and eddies and the high-flung froth of surging chutes. One goes down with a rush on bending paddles and climbs back slowly on bending poles and taut tracking line.

We returned to Abamasagi lake by the approved route. There are long portages on this route, but the weather was cool and we took them in our stride.

On the Kowkash we ran into another spell of unusual heat and found the air full of smoke from fires far to the south. We reached Cavell to learn that for a week the sawmill had been shut down while every man in the place fought fire, that a train has stood by at Nakina ready to evacuate a town which for days was completely surrounded by fire, that friends canoeing down the Albany to James Bay had run for Fort Hope and the safety of Eabemet lake, that from Minaki to Longlac and from Lake Superior to Lansdowne the country had been ablaze for weeks in a summer of heat and drought such as the oldest natives had never known.

Extraordinary as our own experiences had been, they were probably far less trying than those of many others who were in the Ontario wilderness in the summer of 1936, when, as my old-timer phrased it, the weather went completely "screwy."

Arctic Christmas

(*Continued from page 39*)

"You can fool some of the people some of the time," he replied with a grin. "I should like to have every detail of this banquet as much as possible in keeping with old-country traditions. I have a bottle of brandy cached away. I'll fetch it."

He dashed out of doors amid chorused exclamations of: "So he's got a bottle of brandy!" "I hope it's a big one!" "Maybe it's going to be a merry Christmas after all!"

A few minutes afterward the doctor reappeared flourishing a two-ounce bottle of the precious fluid, which he promptly emptied over the pudding and ignited.

The ensuing period of glum silence was interrupted by one of the operators, who produced a microphone, set it on the table and announced: "This is radio station VBK, in the heart of the Arctic. Greetings to all missionaries and trappers, trading posts and Royal Canadian Mounted Police detachments. You are about to hear the entertainment features of the first Christmas dinner ever to be broadcast from north of the Arctic Circle."

The chief operator could play a guitar. His assistant was a wizard with a harmonica. To their accompaniment we sang popular songs, interspersing them with localized jokes and personal messages to acquaintances at the handful of outposts scattered along the coast. Though the microphone served as an excellent inspiration for our witticisms, we scarcely expected that the impromptu programme would be picked up at any great distance, if at all, as the telephone transmitter was low powered. It was therefore with considerable surprise that we later received acknowledgments from almost every corner of the Canadian Arctic.

Just as VBK was signing off one of the Eskimos brought word that a native dance was being held in the visitors' camp, and that we might attend if we cared to. Believing it would provide a striking contrast to our own festivities, we made our way toward the cluster of dome-shaped structures dotting the shore line. Yellow light from the seal-oil lamps shone cheerily through the ice windows, and as we drew nearer we could hear the weird throbbing of a drum.

Gathered in an enormous igloo, the men and women began the ceremony by forming a circle and humming softly while one of their number stepped into the centre and thumped a drum to test its pitch. (The Eskimos' only musical instrument is a light wooden hoop over which caribou skin is tightly stretched.) Holding it by a short handle, the performer dextrously swung it from side to side against a club in his other hand as he danced and sang. The dance had no set form, but was often the pantomimic complement of the songs. Some of the songs were composed on the spot, others seemed to be well known to

nearly everybody. The themes dealt with simple incidents in the lives of the people or extolled the prowess of this or that hunter. When not taking turns with the drum the participants kept in a ring and chanted the choruses.

Though we could understand hardly a word of the songs, the spectacle held us enthralled for several hours. There was something mysterious and compelling in its monotonous simplicity and rhythm. Aware that this dance had been presented in much the same way for thousands of years, we soberly reflected that in a little while hence it would probably disappear, swallowed up by the white man's invading culture.

The igloos were abandoned the next day; the natives packed all their belongings on their sleds and, with staccato commands to the teams ringing out in the crisp air, they drove off into the distance. The settlement was left quiet and forlorn.

I pondered over the tales I had read in my childhood of the celebration of Christmas in the Far North. How different was the scene they had conjured up from that in which I had taken part! In addition to being factually misleading, those stories had created a wrong atmosphere; they had made me think of the Arctic as an eternally frigid and forbidding region where no one could ever be really happy or comfortable. But ultimately I had discovered that the Arctic can be just as congenial as any other section of the globe—and especially at Christmas time.

HBC Packet

(*Continued from page 1*)

A few statistics by way of demonstrating that the Company which operated the first steamship on the Pacific is still leading: Men in the service of the Company during the past three months flew 85,500 miles in 640 hours. Obviously, if there is any virtue in being there first, it should be ours.

* * *

For steady, favourable and unsolicited publicity, there is no ship in Canadian waters equal to the Company's R.M.S. *Nascopie*. The columns she gets in the daily papers of Canada and the United States must give West Indian and Carribean cruise directors a dyspeptic and envious pain. Editorials, Saturday features and straight news items appear all through the summer months, and in the winter the voyage of the previous season is a popular radio lecture subject. It is not surprising, because a lot of Canada is Arctic and the ship making the annual voyage north is an object of real interest. We are officially assured that all these printed words are unsolicited and also that the Company receives actually hundreds of offers from writers, lecturers and photographers proposing to "put the Hudson's Bay Company on the map" in exchange for a free passage. We often wonder what map they mean and what happens after we get there.

There have been years recently when unemployment was one of this Dominion's major problems and widespread sympathy was aroused for the youth of the country who could not find jobs. That situation has eased considerably and anyone who was in touch this year with the universities and technical schools quickly realized that trained young men were not only finding positions readily but in some branches of industry were actually in demand. The truth is that even in 1933, the low ebb of the depression, keen, alert, steady young men were being taken into business. The employment and training of selected men and women of a new generation is one of the pleasant duties, as well as one of the grave responsibilities, of management. To those who moan plaintively over the lack of opportunity there is an answer in the fact that companies with studied and tested personnel policies are always looking for the best.

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It is reported that some of the states of the union to the south have been demoralized by the tourist traffic; that thousands of otherwise honest and hard-working people have turned to a type of shyster livelihood, peddling fake antiques, selling phony guide books and overcharging for chicken dinners and tourist accommodation. At the conclusion of Canada's highly successful 1936 tourist season, it might be well to take stock in our own country of these matters. In the towns and villages the temptation is very great to exploit grossly the transient who has come in the holiday spirit with money in his pocket. In the cities there are always those who discredit the good name of merchant by descending to the practices of midway spielers and shucksters. It would seem, now there is an increasing annual flow of tourists northward, that the public agencies working in the interests of the business could apply themselves to the disciplining of those who profit from the business. Self-discipline of course comes first, and we who are merchants in these western cities must continue to set standards of courtesy, hospitality and fair dealing.

* * *

Obsolescence is no new problem to this Company. Square-rigged sailing ships, flint-lock muskets, York boats and Red River carts have all, at some time, been vital to the Company's business, yet they have been pushed aside into pages of history. Some things survived too long and impeded progress. There were periods when men clung to outworn methods and outdated equipment trying desperately to wring a few more shillings from old things while competitors moved in with the latest and best. Old books, old friends and old wine may ease the strenuous business of living, but old buildings, old machinery, and old merchandise somehow have a way of cluttering up the pace of commerce. Many in the Company's service will learn with some regret of the passing of the old warehouse at Victoria. Built of English brick brought by sailing ships around the Horn, it was the great Pacific coast depot of ninety years ago. Generations of fur traders knew it as the district head office, and there was quiet dignity in the offices at the south end of the building, where fire-places glowed as the captains from the ships told the Company's gentlemen of the latest news from Crimea or of the Sepoy mutiny in India. So, when the wreckers move in to dismember the hand-hewn beams and toss the sea-borne bricks into dusty heaps, let there be not too much mourning over "the passing of another landmark."

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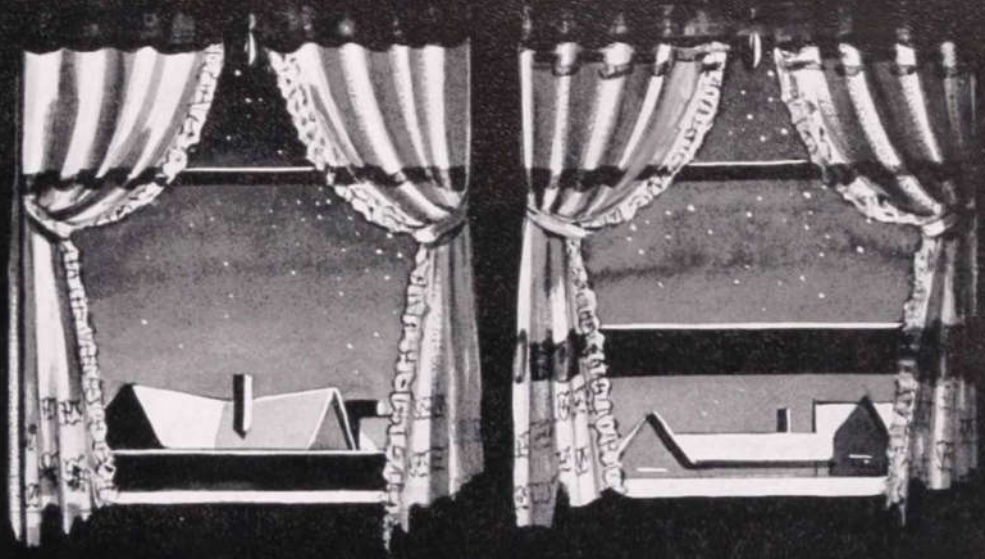
The Company's calendar picture for 1937 is reproduced on the cover of this *Beaver*. It is the twenty-fifth in the series of historical calendars which have been issued annually since 1913. Assembled and complete collections are very rare—they make a decorative, educational series of Canadian historical scenes. Outstanding Canadian and British artists are represented, and it is with some pride that the Company looks back upon its historical calendars. The subject for 1937 depicts the great subarctic naval action in Hudson Bay in 1697 when the French carried out a vigorous and successful raid on York Factory. The fact that the Company lost the engagement is a matter which need not detract from the incident as a spectacular and courageous occasion. There is some satisfaction in being able to take a view of our own history sufficiently detached to make a reverse as interesting a subject as a victory. For purposes of record and for the interest of collectors, a list of Company calendar subjects is given herewith: 1913, Old Time and New Time Trading; 1914, Seven Oaks, 1816; 1915, Signing the Charter; 1916, Voyage of the First Hudson Bay Expedition; 1917, The Building of the First Fort; 1918, The First Public Sale of Furs; 1919, Indians Visiting Fort Charles, 1673; 1920, Prince Rupert, Count Palatine of the Rhine; 1921, The Ceremony of the Pipe; 1922, Fort Prince of Wales, 1734; 1923, Discovery of the Coppermine River by Samuel Hearne, 1771; 1924, Landing of the Selkirk Settlers Red River, 1812; 1925 Fort Vancouver, Erected 1825; 1926, Governor of Rupert's Land on a Tour of Inspection; 1927, In Hudson's Bay, 1845; 1928, Kelsey Sees the Buffalo, August, 1691; 1929, Red River Carts Leaving Fort Garry, 1863; 1930, H B C York Boats at Norway House; 1931, Last Dog Train Leaving Lower Fort Garry, 1909; 1932, Fort St. James, B.C., Governor George Simpson Welcomed by James Douglas, 17th September, 1828; 1933, S.S. *Beaver* Off Fort Victoria; 1934, The Arrival of Jean Baptiste Lagimodiere at the House of Lork Selkirk, New Year's Eve, 1815; 1935, "Trading into Hudson's Bay"; 1936, The Council of the Northern Department of Rupert's Land, Meeting at Norway House, June 21st, 1836; 1937, The Battle in the Bay, 1697.

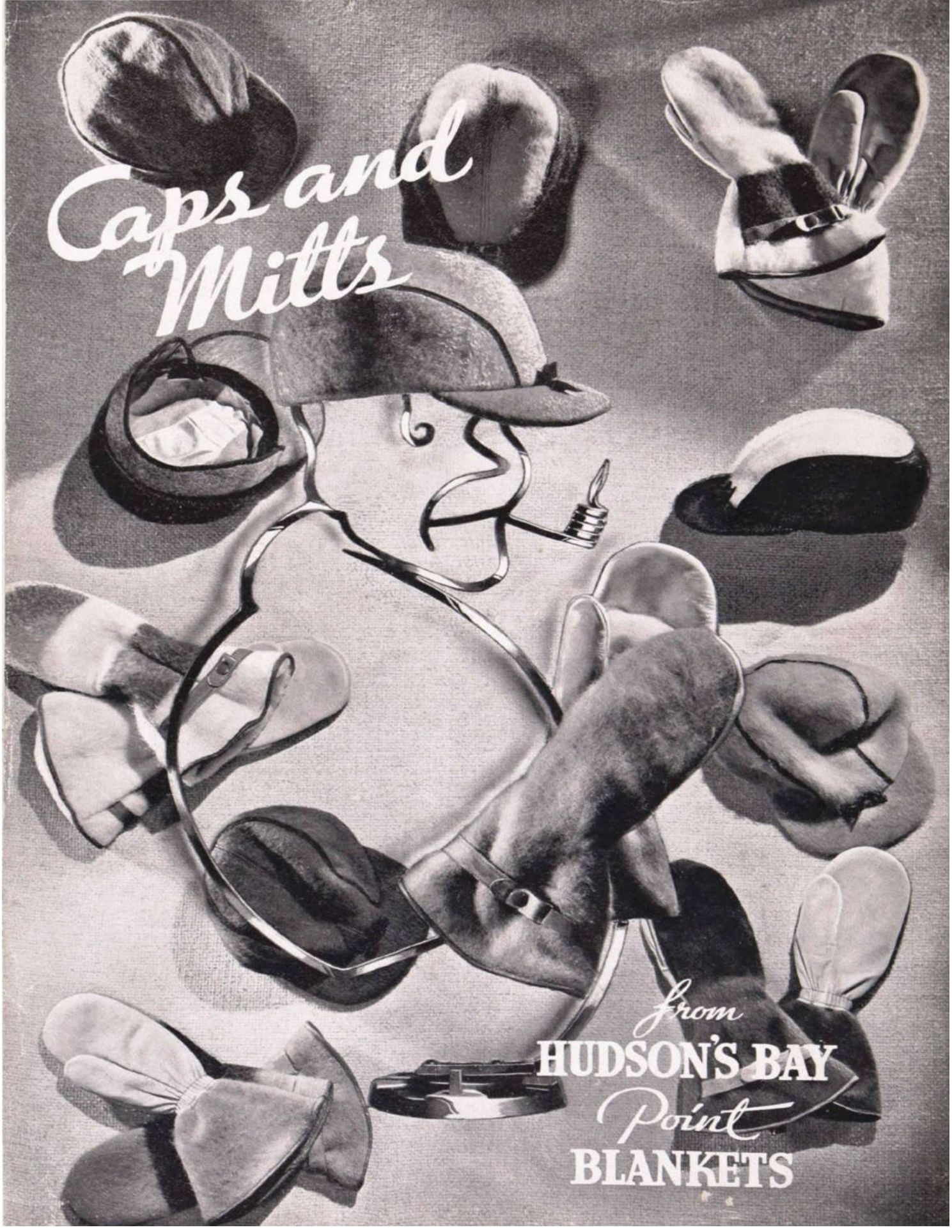
THE BEAVER is published quarterly by the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, commonly known as the Hudson's Bay Company. It is edited at Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg, at the office of the Canadian Committee. Yearly subscription, one dollar; single copies, twenty-five cents. THE BEAVER is entered at the second class postal rate. Its editorial interests include the whole field of travel, exploration and trade in the Canadian North as well as the current activities and historical background of the Hudson's Bay Company, in all its departments throughout Canada. THE BEAVER assumes no liability for unsolicited manuscripts or photographs. Contributions are however solicited, and the utmost care will be taken of all material received. Correspondence on points of historic interest is encouraged. The entire content of THE BEAVER is protected by copyright, but reproduction rights will be given freely upon application. Address: THE BEAVER, Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg.

THE BEAVER is printed for the Hudson's Bay Company by Saults & Pollard Limited, Winnipeg; the engravings made by Brigdens of Winnipeg Limited.

THAT WAS GOOD COFFEE.
DID YOU ASK HER THE NAME?



YES, FORT GARRY.
I MUST GET SOME.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